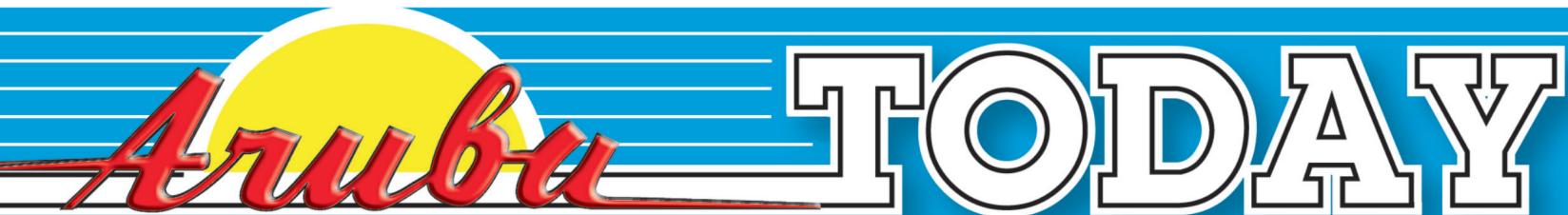


As Japan shutdowns drag on, auto crisis worsens

Read more in Aruba Today Business on Pages B8 & B9



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Monday, March 28, 2011

INSIDE TODAY

SPORTS NEWS

Arnie's Laird



Martin Laird, right, of Scotland, poses with Arnold Palmer and the championship trophy after winning the Arnold Palmer Invitational at Bay Hill golf tournament in Orlando, Fla., Sunday, March 27, 2011.

See Aruba Today Sports

Watch what you eat



Counting carbs may help with 1 diabetes

By Amy Norton
Associated Press

NEW YORK – Tallying the number of carbohydrates in the diet may be helpful to people using an insulin pump to treat type 1 diabetes, a small study suggests.

The study, of 61 adults on insulin pump therapy, found that those who learned to count carbs had a small reduction in weight and waist size after 6 months.

They also reported gains in quality of life and at least for those who consistently counted their carbs with each meal an improvement in blood sugar levels. □

Gadhafi's Stronghold Weakens

Tracer rounds from an anti-aircraft gun light the sky over Algeria Square in Tripoli, Libya. Allied fighters struck targets in Tripoli in as American officials said that the mission to establish a no-fly zone over Libya was nearly complete.

(Moises Saman/The New York Times)



Libyan rebels march toward Gadhafi stronghold

By DAVID D. KIRKPATRICK
© 2011 New York Times

AJDABIYA, Libya – Libyan rebels backed by allied warplanes recaptured a pair of strategic oil towns as they erased recent losses and returned to the doorstep of Moammar Gadhafi's most important bastion of support in his tribal homeland of Surt. Their swift return once again sets the stage for what both sides consider a potentially decisive battle in the war for Libya. It underscores the essential role that Western airstrikes – now focused mainly on Gadhafi ground troops since the elimination of his air defenses – have played in turning around the rebels' fortunes, but that also raises questions about the ability of the poorly equipped and disorganized rebel forces to take on Gadhafi's garrison inside the city of Surt.

Libyan state television report-

ed that Surt had been bombed in air raids late Sunday night. NATO agreed to take over the entire military mission in Libya, including the airstrikes, at a meeting Sunday night in Brussels.

The decision effectively relieved the United States of leading the fight, and ended a week of squabbling among the allies over the issue. The airstrikes, which began a week ago, have quickly reversed the military balance along the eastern coast. The rebel advance on Sunday moved the eastern front further west than it had been at the peak of rebel gains several weeks ago.

Rebel fighters pushed past the oil towns of Brega and Ras Lanuf, meeting little resistance as they recaptured two important refineries.

By the evening, they had pushed the front line west of Bin Jawwad, according to

fighters returning from the front.

Emboldened by the retaking of the strategic crossroads city of Ajdabiya on Saturday, the rebels have moved rapidly, taking advantage of what the Gadhafi government has called a "tactical pullback." There were clashes with government forces overnight near the town of Uqaylah, on the main coastal road to Ras Lanuf, but nothing after that. "There wasn't resistance," said Faraj Sheydani, 42, a rebel fighter interviewed on his return from the front.

"There was no one in front of us. There's no fighting." In western Libya, however, the rebel-held city of Misurata was still under siege by loyalist forces and by Sunday evening rebels were again reporting street fighting in the center of the city and shelling from Gadhafi tanks around the outside.

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GADHAFI'S*Continued from Front Page*

It was still burning 13 hours after the initial blast, said Muhammad, a rebel spokesman there whose full name was withheld for his family's safety.

Speaking over a satellite hook-up and hospital generator, he contradicted statements from the Gadhafi government

that they had restored power and water to the city. He said that rebels had used a local generator to restore electricity to about half the city. But he said that water remained cut off and residents were using a small supply from a desalination facility there. The reports were impossible to confirm because the Gadhafi government has prevented journalists from reaching the city.



In a long-exposure photo, anti-aircraft tracer bullets glow in the night sky over the Rixos Al Nasr Hotel in Tripoli, Libya. The American-led military campaign to destroy Col. Moammar Gadhafi's air defenses and establish a no-fly zone over Libya has nearly accomplished its initial objectives, and the U.S. is moving swiftly to hand command to European allies.

(Moises Saman/The New York Times)

Muhammad said that he believed the airstrikes had not killed any civilians in the area, but had struck barracks and airfields, killing many Libyan soldiers. "Thousands of them, I hope!" he said. In Tripoli on Sunday, refined gasoline was in increasingly short supply. Lines of cars at gas stations stretched for several blocks, and some said they had turned out before dawn for a chance to fill up. There were also lines for bread at bakeries, mainly because the migrant workers Libyans rely on to bake and do other menial jobs have fled the country.

Most stores were closed and usually busy streets of the old city were largely deserted. In interviews under the close supervision of Libyan government minders, several people complained about the Western airstrikes. But even under those circumstances several people managed to voice their dissent. One person waiting for gas volunteered that he



A girl is seen next to a house covered in shrapnel marks on the eastern outskirts of Tripoli that government officials said was targeted by western air strikes. NATO has agreed to take over control of the no-fly zone, and of the effort to protect civilians through aggressive airstrikes from Libya's leader Col. Moammar Gadhafi.

(Moises Saman/The New York Times)

blamed Gadhafi's rule for the shortages.

"Please, I want to say something to the world," another man said in a store nearby, pointing to a group of six men. "1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 – we all don't like Colonel Gadhafi. We like Libyan freedom."

One member of the group, who outside the store moments before had told a particularly florid story about the evil of the international

airstrikes, abruptly walked out the door. "Dangerous," he muttered as he left.

In Green Square, the site of a continuous pro-Gadhafi rally for more than a month, the crowd was unusually small and subdued; some said Gadhafi supporters had shifted their energies to a rally inside his compound, where his supporters say they have gathered as civilian shields against Western bombs. □



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US reducing naval firepower aimed at Gadhafi

By ROBERT BURNS

Associated Press

WASHINGTON – In a sign of U.S. confidence that the weeklong assault on Libya has tamed Moammar Gadhafi's air defenses, the Pentagon has reduced the amount of naval firepower arrayed against him, officials said Sunday.

The move, not yet publicly announced, reinforces the White House message of a diminishing U.S. role a central point in President Barack Obama's national address on Libya. The White House booked Defense Secretary Robert Gates and Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton on three Sunday news shows to promote the administration's case ahead of the speech.

Yet Gates, asked whether the military operation might be over by year's end, said, "I don't think anybody knows the answer to that."

At least one of the five Navy ships and submarines that have launched dozens of Tomahawk cruise missiles at Libyan targets from positions in the Mediterranean Sea has left the area, three defense



Secretary of State Hillary Clinton

officials said. They spoke on condition of anonymity in order to discuss sensitive military movements.

That still leaves what officials believe is sufficient naval firepower off Libya's coast, and it coincides with NATO's decision Sunday to take over command and control of the entire Libya operation. Aided by international air power, Libyan rebels were reported to have made important gains by capturing two oil complexes along the coast.

The shrinking of the naval presence adds substance to Obama's expected reassurance to the American people

that after kicking off the Libyan mission, the U.S. is now handing off to partner countries in Europe and elsewhere the bulk of the responsibility for suppressing Gadhafi's forces. NATO's governing body, meeting in Brussels, accepted a plan for the transfer of command. That is expected to mean that U.S. Army Gen. Carter Ham, who has been the top commander of the Libya operation, will switch to a support role.

Obama administration officials claimed progress in Libya, but lawmakers in both parties voiced skepticism over the length, scope and costs of

the mission.

Obama is trying to address those issues in a speech that's expected to provide his fullest explanation of the U.S. role in Libya and what lies ahead.

Sen. Richard Lugar, R-Ind., questioned whether it made sense to be involved at all. "I don't believe we should be engaged in Libyan civil war," Lugar said on NBC's "Meet the Press."

"I believe the Libyans are going to have to work that out. The fact is that we don't have particular ties with anybody in the Libyan picture."

Sen. Carl Levin, D-Mich., the Senate Armed Services Committee chairman, was broadly supportive of the president's steps so far. "It is a flyover which is succeeding. It has

set Gadhafi back. He's on his heels now," Levin said on CNN's "State of the Union." Still, Levin said it was unclear how long the air campaign will have to last if Gadhafi clings to power.

Gates, an early skeptic of establishing a no-fly zone, told ABC's "This Week" that for practical purposes, the establishment of the zone is complete and can now be sustained "with a lot less effort than what it took to set it up." In advance of Obama's speech Gates and Clinton stressed the administration's message that the U.S. role in the mission will shrink, illustrating that it's possible for the U.S. military to partner with others without always being the leader.□

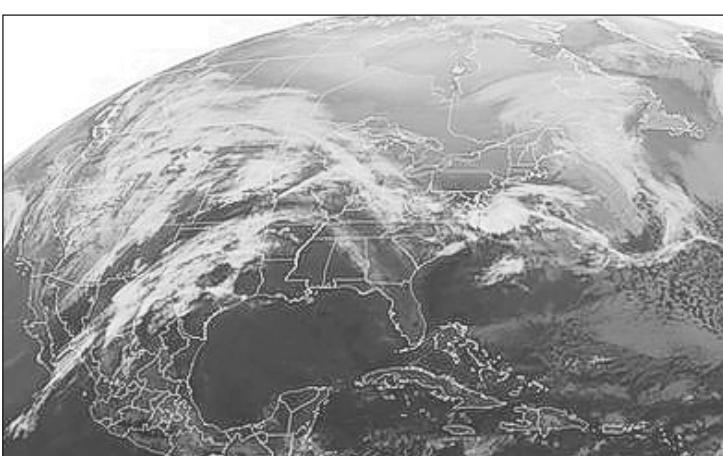
For second day in a row

Storms pelt Southeast with large hail

CHICAGO – Severe thunderstorms that raked the Southeast with scattered tornadoes, large hail and high winds on Saturday reemerged across the region on Sunday after an overnight lull, meteorologists said.

The storms on Sunday pelted parts of Georgia, Alabama and South Carolina with hail stones, some as large as tennis balls, but no serious damage was immediately reported.

"The storms abated overnight but with the heat of the day Sunday, they reigned and are very strong, and some are severe across Alabama and Georgia," said Jack Hales, lead forecaster for the National Weather Service's Storm Prediction Center in Norman, Oklahoma. "Storms will continue through the afternoon." Hail stones on Saturday measured as large as softballs in



Clouds develop across most of Central US

Georgia, and on Sunday there were reports of hail the size of tennis balls in South Carolina. The storms, known to have caused only minor wind damage so far, were expected to begin subsiding after dark on Sunday as temperatures dip and the air mass becomes more stable, Hales said. The world's largest hail on record, measured at 8 inches in

diameter, fell in Vivian, South Dakota, on July 23, 2010. Separate storms currently developing over southern Arkansas may also produce hail, Hales said.

To the north, forecasts were calling for "significant snowfall" in part of the Ohio and Great Lakes regions, he said, adding, "It will certainly be cold enough." □

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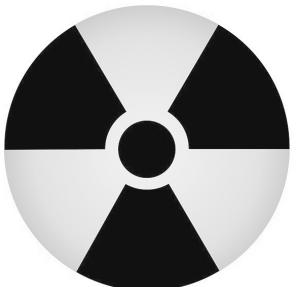
Co-authored by Aruba's
Carlos Viana, OMD, CCN

Tiny amounts of radiation from Japan reach Nevada

By MARTIN GRIFFITH

Associated Press

RENO, Nev. – Nevada has joined several western states in reporting that minuscule amounts of radiation from Japan's damaged nuclear plant are showing up. But as with the other states, scientists say there is no health risk. Extremely small amounts of the radioactive isotopes iodine-131 and xenon-133 reached a monitoring station by Las Vegas' Atomic Testing Museum this week, said Ted Hartwell, manager of the Desert Research Institute's Community Environmental Monitoring Program. Hartwell said he's certain the isotopes came from Japan because they're not usually detected in Nevada. But he said the readings were far below levels that could pose any health risks. "Unless you have an accident like this you wouldn't expect to see this. No doubt it's from Japan," Hartwell told The Associated Press. California, Colorado, Hawaii and Washington have also reported tiny amounts of radiation from the Japan accident. Officials have said those levels also are not harmful. Nevada health officials have said they do not expect any risk to the state from Japanese radiation releases because of the distance the materials would have to travel. "Any material released must travel 10,000 miles across the Pacific Ocean, during which time it will be dispersed and diluted in the atmosphere to levels that might eventually be detectable, but which will not present a health hazard nor require any protective actions," said Eric Matus, radiation physicist for the Nevada State Health Division. □



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Sparkling controversy

I-95 cameras snap speeders

By BRUCE SMITH

Associated Press

RIDGELAND, S.C. – As Interstate 95 sweeps past this small town along South Carolina's coastal plain, motorists encounter cameras that catch speeding cars, the only such devices on the open interstate for almost 2,000 miles from Canada to Miami.

The cameras have nabbed thousands of motorists, won accolades from highway safety advocates, attracted heated opposition from state lawmakers and sparked a federal court challenge. Ridgeland Mayor Gary Hodges said the cameras in his town about 20 miles north of the Georgia line do what they are designed to do: slow people down, reduce accidents and, most importantly, save lives. But lawmakers who want to unplug them argue the system is just a money-maker and amounts to unconstitutional selective law enforcement.

"We're absolutely shutting it

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Sign warns motorists

down," said state Sen. Larry Grooms, chairman of the Senate Transportation Committee. Earlier this month, Ridgeland Police Officer David Swinehamer sat in a van beneath an overpass as a radar gun in a thicket of electronic equipment outside clocked passing vehicles: 60, 72, 73, 67. Then a Mercedes with South Carolina tags sped by going 83 mph over the speed limit. A camera fired and pictures of the tag and driver appeared

on a monitor in the van. The unaware motorist continued north, but could expect a \$133 ticket in the mail in a couple of weeks. "I just don't think it's right," said James Gain of Kissimmee, Fla., one of the lawsuit plaintiffs who got a ticket last year while driving between his home and Greensboro, N.C. "If you get a ticket you should be stopped by an officer, know you have been stopped and have an opportunity to state your case." □

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Harry Coover, creator of Super Glue, dies at 94

KINGSPORT, Tenn. — Harry Wesley Coover Jr., known as the inventor of Super Glue, has died at his home in Kingsport, Tenn. He was 94.

Coover was working for Tennessee Eastman Company when an accident resulted in Super Glue, according to his grandson, Adam Paul of South Carolina. An assistant was distressed that some brand new refractometer prisms were ru-

ined when they were glued together, marking the invention of the popular adhesive.

President Barack Obama honored Coover in 2010 with the National Medal of Science. Coover was born in Newark, Del. He received a degree in chemistry from Hobart College in New York before getting a master's degree and Ph.D., from Cornell.

He worked his way up to vice

president of the chemical division for development for Eastman Kodak. Coover and the team of chemists he worked with became prolific patent holders, achieving more than 460. The work included polymers, organophosphate chemistry, the gasification of coal and of course, cyanoacrylate, better known as Super Glue. Coover also had a part in early television history, appearing with Garry Moore for "I've got a Secret." Moore, the show's host, and Coover were hung in the air on bars that were stuck to metal supports with a single drop of his glue during a live television broadcast.

The Industrial Research In-

In Mississippi

Minister Farrakhan defends Gadhafi



Minister Louis Farrakhan

By MOLLY DAVIS
Associated Press

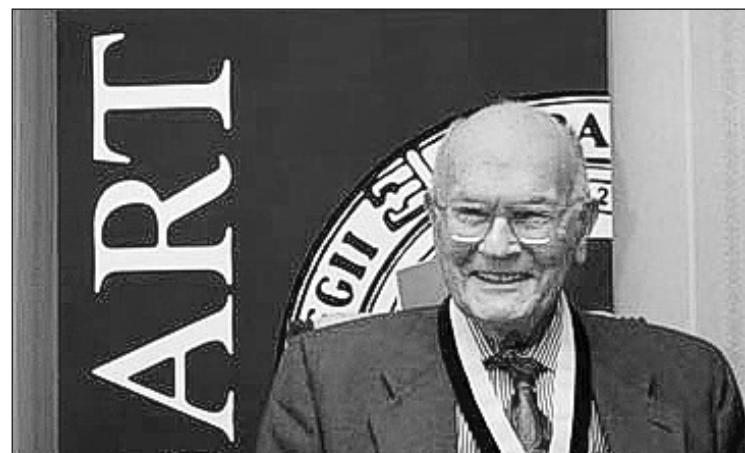
JACKSON, Miss. — Nation of Islam Minister Louis Farrakhan said Friday that the United States lacks the moral authority to attack the forces of embattled Libyan strongman Moammar Gadhafi. The 78-year-old leader of the Chicago-based organization received cheers Friday night from a packed crowd at a civil rights conference at Jackson State University.

Farrakhan said his friend Gadhafi has played the role of a forceful parent in post-colonial Libya. "When you come out of a colonial past where you have lost the value of your own self-interest, God raises somebody from among you that can instill in you the value of yourself again and that person dictates the path until you have grown into your own self-interest," Farrakhan said of Gadhafi. The minister

did not address Gadhafi's alleged role in the bombing of a Pan Am flight over Lockerbie, Scotland that killed 270 people in 1988. Farrakhan gave several reasons why the U.S. lacks the moral authority to intervene in the Libyan conflict, including the deaths of black people at the hands of law enforcement during the Rodney King protests in 1991 and the unhealthy food that the federal government allows into the marketplace.

"The American people are dying, and the Food and Drug Administration is complicit," he said. "Greed is more important than the lives of the American people."

Farrakhan made his remarks at the 6th annual Veterans of the Mississippi Civil Rights Conference. He talked about the importance of strong family units, conservative outfits for women, healthy food and land ownership. □



File photo of Super Glue creator Harry Coover

stitute, for which he served as president in 1982, honored Coover with a gold medal and the U.S. Patent Office inducted him into the National Inventors Hall of Fame in Akron, Ohio in 2004.

Hamlett-Dobson Funeral Home in Kingsport, Tenn., is handling the arrangements. Paul says a family memorial is planned for May at Allendale Mansion in Kingsport, Tenn. □

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In Georgia

2,500 attend funeral for slain officer

ATHENS, Ga. — Thousands of people mourned a slain Georgia police officer whose killing led to a days-long manhunt for a suspect who surrendered live television.

Almost 2,500 people including law enforcement officers from Georgia and elsewhere packed the Classic Center theater for the funeral of Athens-Clarke County Officer Elmer "Buddy" Christian, the Athens Banner-Herald reported. Hundreds more lined the streets as a horse-drawn hearse took his body to Evergreen Memorial Park for burial. One of Christian's hobbies was shoeing horses for friends and family.

Jamie Hood, 33, fatally shot Christian on Tuesday and also shot and seriously wounded Officer Tony Howard, police say. Hood was taken into custody late Friday after requesting that a news crew document his surrender.

Hood had been holed up with



Melissa Christian's funeral

nine hostages at an Athens apartment. Five exited the apartment along with him. Hours earlier he had released four others.

Randy Crowe, pastor of Hull Baptist Church, where Christian was a member, cautioned relatives, friends and co-workers against letting anger consume them.

"Does (Hood) know the devastation he caused?" Crowe

asked. "Does he know what he has taken away from this family, from his friends here today and from his comrades?"

As Hood was being taken into custody late Friday, he told WXIA-TV in a brief videotaped interview, "I regret killing that officer."

When asked what he meant, a handcuffed Hood said, "That officer. That innocent officer. I regret that." Asked for more details,

Hood said, "You know, they killed my brother. They were going to kill me."

Hood was sentenced to 12 years in prison in 1997 for armed robbery and released in 2009. In 2001, while Hood was serving time, his 22-year-old brother Timothy Hood was shot and killed by an Athens police officer. Investigators said at the time that Timothy Hood pulled a gun on an officer and was shot when the weapon jammed. □

At 75 years old

1st female VP candidate Ferraro passes away

By BETH FOUHY
 Associated Press

BOSTON — Geraldine Ferraro's selection as Walter Mondale's Democratic running mate in the 1984 presidential election made her a winner as far as history was concerned, despite an unsuccessful campaign that proved to be a tough political slog against a popular incumbent. Her vice presidential bid, the first for a woman on a major party ticket, emboldened women across the country to seek public office and helped lay the groundwork for Hillary Rodham Clinton's presidential candidacy in 2008 and John McCain's choice of his running mate, Sarah Palin, that year. "By choosing a woman to run, you send a powerful signal to all Americans: There are no doors we cannot unlock," Ferraro said in her acceptance speech at



Geraldine Ferraro

the 1984 Democratic convention. "We will place no limits on achievement. If we can do this, we can do anything." Ferraro died Saturday in Boston, where the 75-year-old was being treated for complications of blood cancer. She died just before 10 a.m., said Amanda Fuchs Miller, a family friend who worked for Ferraro in her 1998 Senate bid and was acting as a spokeswoman for the family. □

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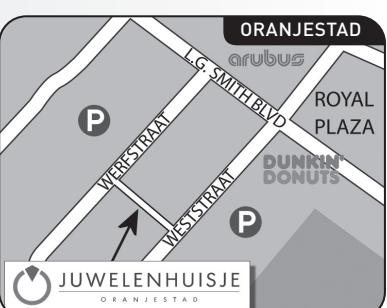
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SAN NICOLAS -- San Nicolas' newest restaurant opened this past Friday at Helfrichstrat 63, and brings to the island hickory-smoked barbecue for the first time. Now this is not just another restaurant offering barbecue. "Barbecue, by definition, is not meat quickly cooked on a grill—that's just grilled meat with some barbecue sauce on top...barbecue is meat cooked over low heat for a very long time, and imparting flavor with wood makes it 'smoked' barbecue," explains owner Mike Bislick.

Mike Bislick's fiancé, Tina Causey-Escobedo, is the Hollywood Smokehouse Diner's pit master overseeing this smoked meat art form. Tina was raised in North Carolina, where she grew up on

that region's famous pulled pork barbecue. "Many regions throughout the South, Southwest, and Midwest are known for a particular style of smoked barbecue, each using different types of wood to flavor the meat, as well as different types of sauces to add to the flavor...I opted for hickory wood because its sweet aroma is not too overpowering like some other types of wood, and it goes well with pork, beef, chicken, and even fish." The process of smoking does take a lot of time, patience, and technique, but Tina believes it is well worth the end-result. "Putting meat on the grill for a few minutes is certainly a fast, easy, and convenient way to prepare meat, and anyone can do it, but I wanted to bring this centuries-old technique that is

now a very popular culinary art form in the U.S. to Aruba. I knew going into this that it would not be fast and easy like grilling, but it is so worth the effort, and the flavor and tenderness of the meat is incomparable to any other 'barbecue' on the island.

The Hollywood Smokehouse Diner currently has that famous Carolina pulled pork on the menu, as well as Texas-style beef brisket that Tina fell in love with in past trips to San Antonio, Texas. Tina and Mike had a mammoth smoker custom built for them in Oklahoma that holds some 250 pounds of meat. The process of smoking actually begins 24 hours prior to cooking it. The meats are coated in a rub of spices and left in the refrigerator overnight, then into the smoker they go for about 14 hours, where they will smoke over hickory wood until tender enough to cut with a fork. Tina's southern roots also inspired side dishes from her family's recipes and include baked beans, potato salad, cole slaw, and to go with that Texas-style brisket she makes Tex-Mex rice and black beans. Many other items will soon be added to the menu, including daily specials of other traditional southern cuisine like country-fried steak with mashed potatoes and gravy, and desserts like pecan pie, fruit cobblers, and red velvet cake, as well as gourmet cupcakes like her chocolate-banana cupcakes with chocolate butter cream frosting with nuts and pumpkin spice cupcakes with cream cheese frosting and toasted pecans.

The Hollywood Smokehouse is located in a historic building in San Nicolas that



has been in the Bislick family since 1941, when Mike's great grandfather opened it as The Hollywood Hotel. Mike and Tina decided to embrace the retro feel of San Nicolas and used a 1950's diner-style motif inside. "San Nicolas is a very special community—it has kept much of that old Caribbean vibe that we find to be very charismatic...we encourage residents from other parts of the island to 'rediscover' San Nicolas and the simple is-

land charm that it offers, and I think tourists will also find it a worthy adventure away from the commercial hustle and bustle of the hotel areas," says Mike.

The Hollywood Smokehouse Diner is open for lunch from 11:30am to 2:30pm, Monday through Thursday, and for lunch and dinner on Friday and Saturday from 11:30am to 9pm. For more information or directions call 733-3650. □



Fundraiser to cover travel for top swimmers representing Aruba

Barracudas Synchronized Swimmers organize Fun Bingo



PALM BEACH – On Saturday, April 2nd 2011 a fun bingo event will be organized from 2:00PM-5:00 PM in the Grand Ballroom of the Aruba Marriott Resort (hotel). There are many cash prizes to be won ranging from 75 to 750 florins, along with some very

exciting door prizes. All proceeds for this bingo will be used to cover the travel expenses of the Barracuda Synchronized Swimming Club of Aruba's top swimming performers, who will represent Aruba abroad. The Barracuda girls that perform in the syn-



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chronized swimming selection train very hard, around some 15-20 hours per week to put in the best scores for Aruba. Upcoming performances include synchronized swimming contests in Canada, Puerto Rico and Peru. The sports club does not have sufficient funds and therefore organizes this bingo at The Aruba Marriott Resort as a fundraiser. Everybody is welcome to join and great prizes can be won! The Barracudas Synchronized Swimming Club was founded in 1975 and houses multiple top performing teams in synchronized swimming, consisting of girls (only) ranging in age from 6 to 18. With the Barracudas being the only synchronized swimming club in Aruba, they are well known throughout the Caribbean as one of the strongest performers in the region! If you would like to be part of this winning team and become a synchronized swimmer at the Barracudas Swimming Club you are most welcome to join. You must be in the possession of swimming diploma C, and if you like music, swimming, stretching and exercise, this might be just the sport for you! For more information, please contact the Barracudas Synchronized Swimming Club, Louella Brezovar, tel 587-3527. □



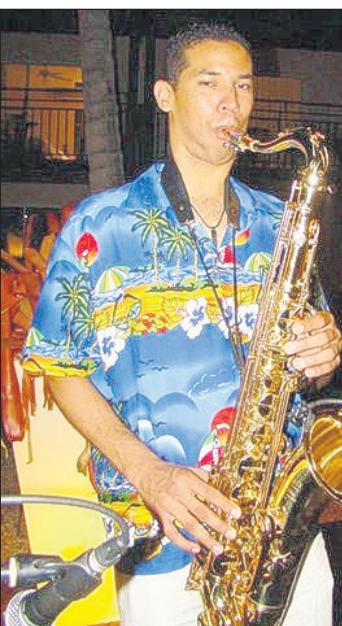
Evening under the stars

Divi Dazzles CATA delegates with a magic



DRUIF BEACH – Delegate of the annual CATA tourism conference, hoteliers and members of the Aruba Tourism Authority enjoyed a most creative evening offered by Divi Mega Resorts, hosted by Managing Director Alex Nieuwmeyer and the General Managers of Divi's family of five local resorts, Marin Bijl of Divi & Tamarijn, Gerrith Griffith of Divi Village Golf & Beach Resort and Mark Nooren of Divi Phoenix. Also on hand to meet the dignitaries Tabitha Fecunda, Island Marketing & Promotion Manager, and

Howard Maduro, Divi's new Latin America Sales Director. The evening took off with a cocktail party under the star on the newly refreshed pool deck, to the music of sax player Jairo Valles Alvarado, and continued with a spectacular Ritmo Cubano production named Sigue Sonando, a story of a little girl dreaming of becoming a princess for just one day, told by talented acrobats, exotic dancers and fire spinners. The show, explained Nieuwmeyer is performed every Sunday at the Tamarijn Beach Hotel to an enthusiastic audience of in-house guests.



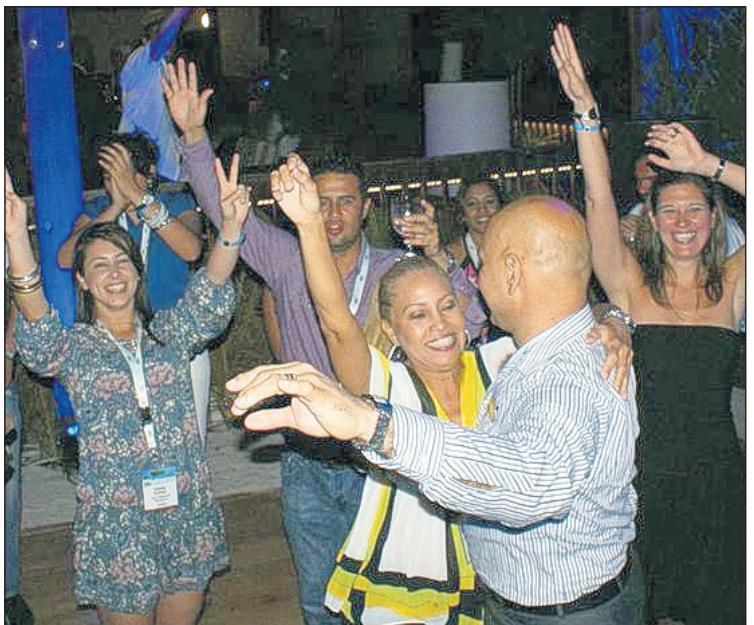
The invited CATA delegates, all travel professionals from Latin America, were enchanted with the performance. They were invited to the island in order to experience Aruba's vacation product first-hand and were very impressed with the level of entertainment Divi Mega Resorts featured and the beauty of their resort surroundings.



Executive Chef Anselmo Lacle further charmed them with his interactive, rich and varies buffet dinner on the beach, as their toes were caressed by the sugar white sand their taste buds were tempted with contemporary Caribbean and international specialties to the sounds of Steel in Motion steel pans, who provided dinner music.

After dinner, a beach golf competition unfolded engaging guests by golfing in the sand, under a tropical sky canopy. Entertainer Giovanni Trim filled the dance floor immediately after dessert with hot Latin hits compelling guests to sway to the music, and dance.

Pictured here unforgettable party moments. □



Volkswagen top performers dine at Aqua Grill



PALM BEACH - Aruba is a popular destination for incentive groups, conferences, and corporate team-building seminars. Many of those groups are choosing Aqua Grill as a dinner destination while here on the island. The critically-praised seafood restaurant's fresh-only concept allows diners to enjoy catches brought in daily by local fishermen, as well as seafood flown in fresh daily, including live Maine lobster. This past Thursday evening, a group of top sales representatives, dealers, and management from Volkswagen in the United States enjoyed the warm, island hospitality and award-winning cuisine from Aqua Grill. The group was here for an award-incentive trip for excellent performance with Volkswagen and its customers. The group stayed at the Marriott Resort & Stellaris Casino, and is one of several groups from Volkswagen that will be enjoying the pleasures of Aruba and Aqua Grill over the next couple of weeks. □



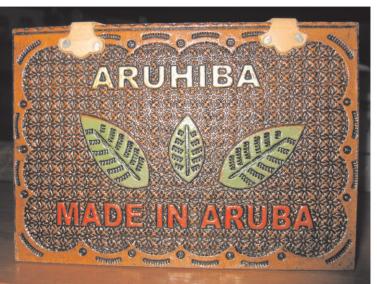
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cigars called "Aruhiba". These cigars are produced and cultivated in Aruba. Petrocchi has always had an interest in the cigar business and has also sold Premium Cuban Cigars, and now he is growing his own tobacco crop. After many attempts and trips to Santo Domingo and Cuba

ORANJESTAD- Benjamin Petrocchi started the newest export product of Aruba, locally produced



he started his own production and cultivation of Aruhiba Cigars in Aruba. The process took ten years. Petrocchi dedication to the cigars is important for the molding and process of making a perfect cigar which takes a long time. The cigar box is specially designed for the cigars with the logo "Aruhiba". Petrocchi considers Aruhiba a promotion for Aruba through fine quality cigars. The company sells International cigars as well. Buy a gift box of Aruhiba Corona with five

cigars and you will get 1 FREE cigar of \$35. Located at the Historic Dutch Windmill. Open from Monday to Saturday from 9am till 8:30pm. And open on Sunday



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During its annual Fire Awareness Day

Playa Linda fights fire with confidence

Gained during training exercise



PALM BEACH - In keeping both guests and employees safe, Playa Linda Beach Resort recently carried out its annual Fire Awareness Training day. The training session, organized by Playa Linda's Director of Loss & Prevention Remo Kock, counted the participation of the Aruba Fire Department, which not only assisted with informative lectures, but also helped instruct resort employees on how to use the standard-issue fire fighting equipment installed on each guest room floor.

"The exercise provided the opportunity for everyone to

really feel the heat of a fire, and to learn how to put it out. The training was an effective way to gain confidence of how to act in the emergency situation of a fire," explained Remo.

Playa Linda employees learned how to operate fire fighting tools, using both a fire extinguisher and a fire hose to extinguish a con-

trolled blaze. For the exercise, The Aruba Fire Department provided two fire trucks, fire equipment as well as a dozen firefighters. The Red Cross and the Government ambulance personnel were also present. For crowd and traffic control, the Beach Police had two officers present during the training. With the assistance of everyone involved, the training session proved both a safe and fun learning experience.

Remo expressed satisfaction with the overall outcome, with a great turn out and participation by the Playa Linda staff.

He thanked all outside instances, especially the Fire Department, in providing its expertise and in helping to educate on the important issue of Fire Awareness and Emergency Actions. □



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When Illegal Doesn't Matter:

US Uncut's National Day Of Protest



Tax Expert Bob Willens

By Allison Kilkenny

Associated Press

Today marked US Uncut's second big nationwide protest. From coast-to-coast, more than forty cities joined in a day of action protesting the tax-dodging practices of massive corporations that they see as the real source of the country's deficit.

"I'm tired of people calling for shared sacrifice and it's all coming from the workers and nothing's coming from the top," says protester Dave Sonenberg. "I'm sick of companies like Bank of America not paying their taxes."

Bank of America hasn't paid a nickel in federal income taxes for the past two years, and in fact raked in an additional \$1 billion in tax "benefits." The bank is enjoying these profits after accepting \$45 billion from taxpayers, which the company then got to count as a deduction when they paid back the money. Big corporations get to play by a whole different set of rules, says tax expert Bob Willens of New York-based Robert Willens LLC:

It's also not unusual for a company to pay no federal taxes, while still paying state

and local taxes, Willens said. Items that can be deducted for federal purposes aren't always deductible for state and local returns, he said. State taxes can also be based on the amount of capital deployed in a state, not pre-tax income. This is why two-thirds of corporations in America pay no federal income taxes. If they were forced to, we're told, the whole country would suffer. Jobs would be lost, salaries slashed. Thank heavens we've avoided such calamity by allowing corporations to shape legislation in their favor.

In 2010, Bank of America handed out \$2.2 million in campaign contributions to Congressional representatives and PACs. By throwing around that much cash, huge companies like BoA have a big say when it comes to crafting legislation that permits them to escape paying taxes, according to US Uncut organizer J.A. Myerson.

"The reason it's not illegal is because they have bought and paid for the people who make the laws."

The laws are made to accommodate this sort of nefariousness," he says, adding that the process is wrong, and ordinarily that would mean approaching Congress to ask them to fix it, but there's no point in attempting that when the system is so heavily rigged in favor of the rich and well connected. "So what US Uncut is doing right now is not Capitol Hill lobbying because that doesn't seem like it's a fruitful avenue. It's trying to directly undermine the ability of Bank of America to earn record windfall profits by depleting the public trust that they are an upstanding member of society."

The rigged game has left citizens feeling burnt and angry. An activist named Sally says BoA's practice of evicting people from their homes without the original mortgage notes is illegal, but that "illegal doesn't seem to matter." Organizers created fake checks that represent what Bank of America should have paid in taxes during 2009. □

Meanwhile, in Brazil ...



David M. Shribman

By David M. Shribman

Associated Press

WASHINGTON - It was a week in which American jets bombed Libya and nuclear engineers struggled with a crisis in Japan. The world was convulsed with questions about the role outsiders ought to play in a domestic rebellion in North Africa and what role nuclear power should play in a world requiring more energy even as it celebrates green initiatives. In this setting, the president of the United States gave two remarkable speeches -- in Brazil, of all places.

Neither, it turned out, was about American power or the challenges posed by growing demands for energy and environmental sustainability. Barack Obama talked about colonialism, human freedom and the American Dream. They may have been the most revealing speeches the president has made since he took office. It is true that Politico.com found Obama's trip "short on progress" and The New York Times used his speeches to remark on the president's apparent reluctance to speak on race. They missed the point. This trip, and these speeches, were extraordinary and not for what the president ignored but for what he said. In one sense, these speeches planted Barack Obama pilloried from the right as a socialist, from the left as a reluctant progressive firmly in the American center.

Yes, he deplored colonialism, but colonialism is so much a 19th- and 20th-century phenomenon that no conservative can reasonably argue that his was a Marxist interpretation. And, yes, he celebrated capitalism, but in the rhetoric of opportunity, insulating him from criticism from liberals who might have regretted his failure to focus on the excesses of the market, but could not have missed his emphasis on the aspirations of the poor and striving. But even as he positioned himself as a centrist, he established himself as a president with a sensibility distinctly different from every one of his predecessors.

To see how he did it, let's look at a few excerpts from those speeches, one at the CEO Business Summit in Brasilia, the other in Rio de Janeiro:

Like you, we threw off the yoke of colonialism and established our independence in the New World. We, too, are a vast nation of immigrants from different backgrounds and cultures who find strength in our diversity, strength and unity in our national pride. And as the two largest democracies and economies in the Western Hemisphere, we share a belief that all human beings deserve the chance to shape their own destiny and fulfill their God-given potential. At first blush this paragraph, from the speech to the business leaders, looks like standard human rights rhetoric, which from the Declaration of Independence (1776, Philadelphia) to the Declaration of the Rights of Man (1789, Paris) to the Fourteen Points (1918, Washington) to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948, United Nations) has changed little. But in this statement, Obama mixed in a sprinkle of "nation of immigrants" (evocative of John F. Kennedy) and a dash of "diversity, strength and unity" (strains of Bill Clinton) and, by extending it beyond our own shores to the entire American hemisphere, made the thought his own. □

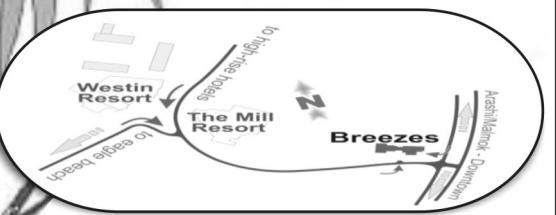
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Rolling out the latest tool

Israel deploys rocket defense system against Gaza

By ARON HELLER

Associated Press

BEERSHEBA, Israel — Israel deployed a cutting-edge rocket defense system on Sunday, rolling out the latest tool in its arsenal to stop a recent spike in attacks from the neighboring Gaza Strip. Israel hopes the homegrown Iron Dome system will provide increased security to its citizens, but officials warned that it can't do the job alone. The system went into operation shortly after an Israeli aircraft struck a group of militants in Gaza, killing two. Israeli said they were about to fire a rocket. The Iron Dome system has raised hopes that Israel has finally found a solution to the years of rocket fire from Gaza. The primitive rockets have evaded Israel's high-tech weaponry, in part because their short flight path, just a few seconds, makes them hard to track. The government approved Iron Dome in 2007. Its developers have compared



Purporting to show rocket fired

the effort to a high-tech start-up, working around the clock in small teams to perfect its weapons, radar and software systems. The developer, local defense contractor Rafael, declared the system ready for use last year. Iron Dome uses sophisticated cameras and radar to track incoming rockets, determine where they will land, and intercept and destroy them far from their targets. If the system determines the rocket is headed to an open area where casualties are unlikely, it can allow the weapon to explode on the

ground.

Brig. Gen. Doron Gavish, commander of Israel's air defense corps, said Iron Dome has passed a series of tests and has now reached its "evaluation phase" in the field. It is

expected to be fully operational in a matter of months. He added that it was only supposed to be deployed later in the year, but it was put into operation earlier because of the recent rocket attacks from Gaza. "Obviously, after what we saw in the last few weeks, we accelerated the phases," he said, standing before the brown, box-like battery on the outskirts of Beersheba, southern Israel's largest city with a population of nearly 200,000. After two years of relative calm, tensions along the Israel-Gaza border have heated up in recent weeks with Gaza militants firing deeper

and more frequently into Israel, and the military striking back hard. Beersheba, more than 25 miles from Gaza, has been struck several times. Although Israel and Gaza's ruling Hamas militant group have both said they have no interest in escalating the situation, the renewed hostilities have fed concerns of another large-scale Israeli military operation. In December 2008, Israel invaded Gaza in response to years of rocket and mortar barrages on its southern communities, killing 1,400 Palestinians, including more than 900 civilians, and causing widespread destruction. □

East Timor police take over from UN forces



East Timor's national police force

DILI — United Nations police returned full control of East Timor to the national force Sunday, the UN and government said, more than four years after bloody clashes threatened to push the country into civil war.

Following a Sunday ceremony, from the National Police of Timor-Leste (PNTL) will be responsible for the whole country, with the UN police in a supporting role, the statement by the UN and East Timorese government said.

"We will continue to work side-by-side," UN special representative for East Timor

Ameerah Haq said. "However, PNTL will be squarely in the driver's seat, and the UN will focus on providing the training and support Timor-Leste's police service needs to further strengthen its capabilities over the long term."

she added, using the country's formal name. The UN will maintain a presence of up to 1,280 police to support the PNTL until after the presidential election in 2012, when the UN peacekeeping mission plans to withdraw from the tiny southeast Asian state, the statement said. □



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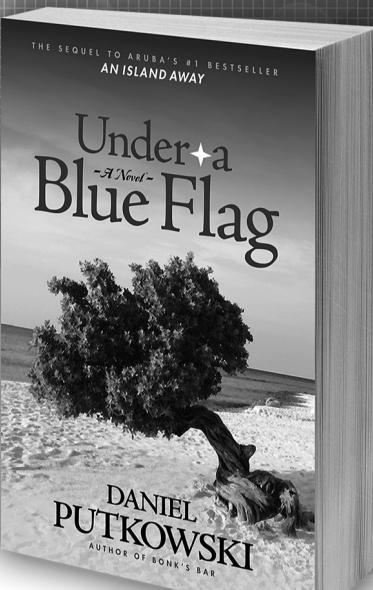


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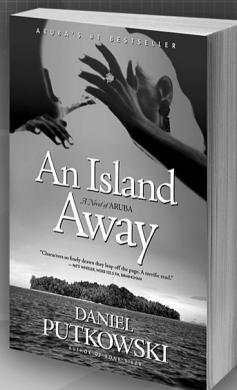
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In London

BIGGEST PROTEST SINCE IRAQ WAR IN 2003



Protest against coalition government

By MEERA SELVA
Associated Press

LONDON — More than 250,000 people took to London's streets to protest the toughest spending cuts since World War II one of the larg-

est demonstrations since the Iraq war as riot police clashed with a small group. More than 200 people were arrested. Although most of Saturday's demonstration was peaceful, clashes continued into the

night as dozens of protesters pelted officers with bottles and ammonia-filled lightbulbs. Groups set several fires and smashed shop windows near tourist landmarks such as Trafalgar Square.

Teachers, nurses, firefighters, public sector workers, students, pensioners and campaign groups all took part in Saturday's mass demonstration.

"They shouldn't be taking money from public services. What have we done to deserve this?" said Alison Foster, a 53-year-old school teacher. "Yes, they are making vicious cuts."

That's why I'm marching, to let them know this is wrong." □

REBELS PUSH WEST AS AIR STRIKES HIT GADDAFI FORCES



Destroyed vehicles and munitions

By Angus MacSwan
Associated Press

BIN JAWAD, Libya — Libyan rebels pushed further west on Sunday to retake more territory abandoned by Muammar Gaddafi's retreating forces, which have been weakened

by Western air strikes. Emboldened by the capture of the strategic town of Ajdabiyah with the help of foreign warplanes on Saturday, the rebels have reversed military losses in their five-week insurgency and are now back in control of all the main oil terminals in the eastern half of the sprawling, North African Arab country.

Rebels said they now had their sights on the Gaddafi stronghold of Sirte in central Libya. A convoy of 20 military vehicles including truck-mounted anti-aircraft guns was seen leaving Sirte on Sunday and heading west toward Tripoli, along with dozens of civilian cars carrying families and stuffed with personal belongings, a AP reporter in the vicinity reported.

Nearer the capital Tripoli,

Gaddafi's forces fought rebels in the center of Misrata to try to consolidate his grip on western Libya after losing much of the east. Misrata is the only western city in rebel hands and has been sealed off for weeks.

"There are no Gaddafi soldiers here. We control all the town," rebel Youssef Ahmed, 22, said in Bin Jawad, the westernmost point the insurgents reached in early March 525 km from Tripoli before being pushed back by Gaddafi's better-armed forces to their eastern bastion Benghazi.

Fighters roamed around Bin Jawad in rebel pick-up trucks mounted with machine guns and shot in the air in celebration. "We want to go to Sirte today. I don't know if it will happen," said 25-year-old Marjai Agouri as he waited with another 100 rebels along the main coastal road outside Bin Jawad with three multiple rocket launchers, six anti-aircraft guns and around a dozen pickup trucks mounted with machine guns. □

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In Peru

Leftist former soldier rises in election poll

LIMA, Peru – A left-leaning former army officer has risen quickly into contention for Peru's presidency may even be leading the tight five-person race for the first-round vote on April 10, according to a poll released Sunday.

Ollanta Humala, who lost the 2006 election to President Alan Garcia, was favored by 21.2 percent of those polled across the country on March 21-24. That was up from 15.7 percent a week before in the CPI poll sponsored by RPP radio. Congresswoman Keiko Fujimori, daughter of a disgraced former president, was backed by 19.9 percent and former President Alejandro Toledo was favored by 18.6 percent. Both are roughly even with Humala because the poll had a margin of error of plus or minus 2.2 percentage points. The race is volatile because roughly a quarter of voters say they are still undecided or might change their minds. Humala favors a stronger state role in the economy and he was once close to Venezuela's Hugo Chavez, though he has distanced himself in recent years from Chavez, who



Peru's presidential candidate Ollanta Humala

is unpopular in Peru. Toledo, an economist who was the first Peruvian president of largely Indian ancestry, has slipped back into the pack after leading with about 30 percent in early February. The poll shows a race so tight that the candidate who could beat any other in a likely runoff, former Lima Mayor Luis Castaneda, is running fifth in the pack and could be eliminated in the first round of voting. Castaneda was the first choice of just 15.5 percent of those polled. But in head-to-head competition, he topped Humala 52-37, led Fujimori 49-33 and was ahead of Toledo 50-34. □

Disaster-hit Japan faces nuclear crisis

By Kiyoshi Takenaka
Associated Press

TOKYO – Japan appeared resigned to a long fight to contain the world's worst atomic crisis in 25 years after high radiation levels complicated work at its crippled nuclear plant.

Engineers have been battling to control the six-reactor Fukushima complex since it was damaged by a March 11 earthquake and tsunami that also left more than 27,000 people dead or missing across Japan's devastated north east. Radiation at the plant has soared in recent days: latest readings at the weekend showed contamination 100,000 times normal in water at reactor No. 2 and 1,850 times normal in the nearby sea. Those were the most alarming levels since the crisis began, experts said.

"It's very worrying there is something seriously wrong at No. 2," said Rianne Teule, a nuclear expert for environmental group Greenpeace based in South Africa.

Under-pressure plant operator Tokyo Electric Power Co. TEPCO conceded what experts have long been saying: that Japan now faces a protracted and uncertain operation to contain overheating



Evacuees from Fukushima

fuel rods and prevent a meltdown.

"Regrettably, we don't have a concrete schedule at the moment to enable us to say in how many months or years the crisis will be over," TEPCO vice-president Sakae Muto said in the latest of round-the-clock briefings the company holds. Though experts said radiation in the Pacific waters will quickly dissipate, the levels at the site are clearly dangerous, and the 450 or so engineers there have won admiration and sympathy around the world for their bravery and sense of duty.

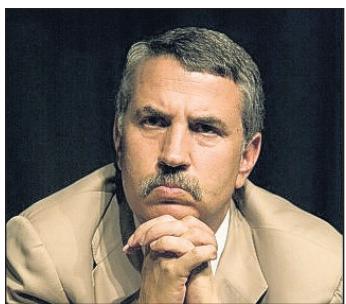
The nuclear crisis is an especially sensitive subject for Japanese given they are the only nation to have been hit by atomic bombs, at Hiroshima

and Nagasaki in 1945.

Last week, three workers at Fukushima were hurt with radiation burns to their legs after water seeped over their boots, and on Sunday engineers had to abandon reactor No. 2 after the new reading.

Further afield, beyond the evacuation zone around Fukushima, there has been plenty of evidence of radiation from tap water in Tokyo 240 km south of the nuclear facility to particles found as far away as Iceland. Japanese officials and international nuclear experts have generally said the levels away from the plant are not dangerous for humans, who anyway face comparable radiation doses on a daily basis from natural substances, X-rays or plane flights. □

Hoping for Arab Mandelas



By THOMAS L. FRIEDMAN
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With Libya, Yemen, Bahrain and Syria now all embroiled in rebellions, it is not an exaggeration to suggest that the authoritarian lid that has smothered freedom in the Arab world for centuries may be coming off all 350 million Arab peoples at once. Personally, I think that is exactly what is going to happen over time. Warm up the bus for all the Arab autocrats — and for you, too, Ahmadinejad. As one who has long believed in the democracy potential for this part of the world, color me both really hopeful and really worried about the prospects.

I am hopeful because the Arab peoples are struggling for more representative and honest government, which is what they will need to overcome their huge deficits in education, freedom and women's empowerment that have been holding them back. But getting from here to there requires crossing a minefield of tribal, sectarian and governance issues.

The best way to understand the potential and pitfalls of this transition is to think about Iraq. I know that the Iraq war and the democracy-building effort that followed have been so bitterly divisive in America that no one wants to talk about Iraq. Well, today we're going to talk about Iraq because that experience offers some hugely important lessons for how to manage the transition to democratic governance of a multisectarian Arab state when the iron lid is removed. Democracy requires three things: citizens — that is, people who see themselves as part of an undifferentiated national community where anyone can be ruler or ruled. It requires self-determination —

that is, voting. And it requires what Michael Mandelbaum, author of "Democracy's Good Name," calls "liberty."

"While voting determines who governs," he explained, "liberty determines what governments can and cannot do. Liberty encompasses all the rules and limits that govern politics, justice, economics and religion."

And building liberty is really hard. It will be hard enough in Middle East states with big, homogenous majorities, like Egypt, Tunisia and Iran, where there is already a powerful sense of citizenship and where national unity is more or less assumed. It will be doubly hard in all the other states, which are divided by tribal, ethnic and sectarian identities and where the threat of civil war is ever present.

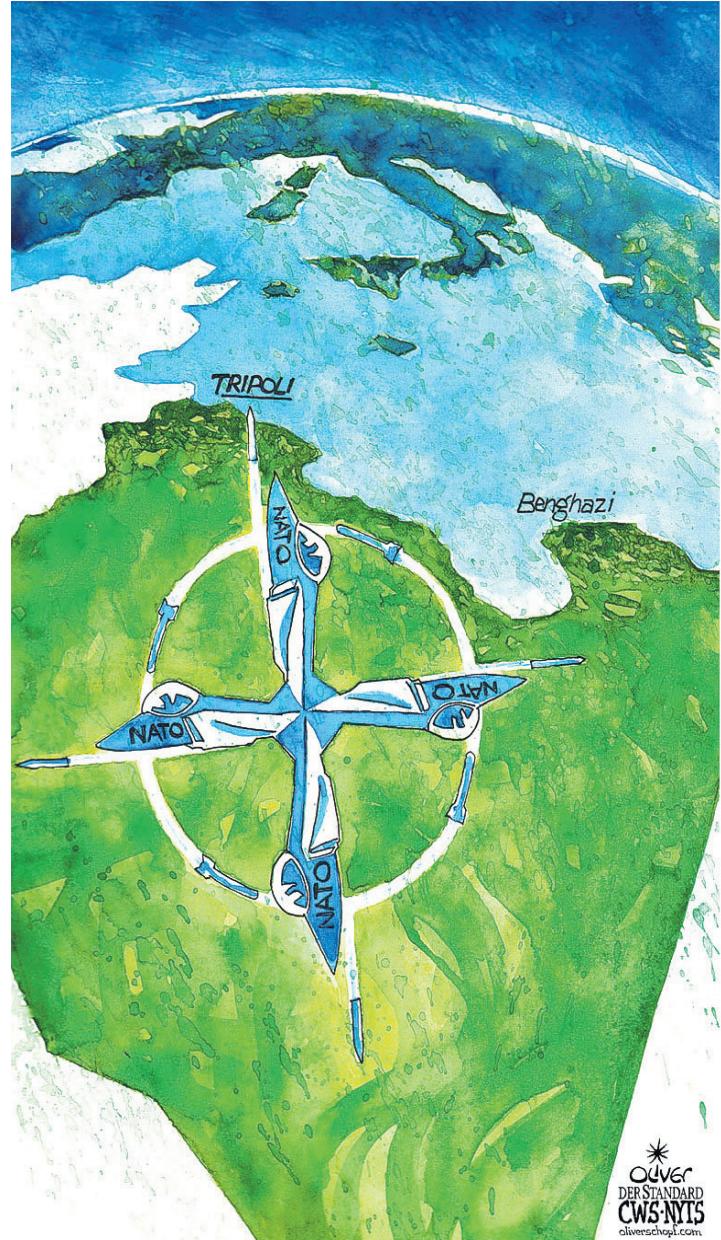
Not one was more divided in that way than Iraq. What did we learn there? First, we learned that when you removed the authoritarian lid the tensions between Iraqi Kurds, Shiites and Sunnis erupted as each faction tested the other's power in a low-grade civil war. But we also learned that alongside that war many Iraqis expressed an equally powerful yearning to live together as citizens.

For all of the murderous efforts by al-Qaida to trigger a full-scale civil war in Iraq, it never happened. And in Iraq's last election, the candidate who won the most seats, a Shiite, Ayad Allawi, ran on a multi-sectarian platform with Sunnis. Lesson: While these tribal identities are deeply embedded and can blow up at anytime, there are also powerful countertrends in today's more urbanized, connected, Face-booked Middle East.

"There is a problem of citizenship in the Arab world," said Michael Young, the Lebanese author of "The Ghosts of Martyr's Square," "but that is partly because these regimes never allowed their people to be citizens. But despite that, you can see how much the demonstrators in Syria have been trying to stay nonviolent and speak about freedom for the whole nation."

Lesson 2: What was crucial in keeping the low-grade civil war in Iraq from exploding, what was crucial in their writing of their own constitution for how to live together, and what was crucial in helping Iraqis manage multiple fair elections was that they had a credible neutral arbiter throughout this transition: the U.S. America played that role at a staggering cost, and not always perfectly, but played it we did. In Egypt, the Egyptian army is playing that arbiter role. Somebody has to play it in all these countries in revolt, so they can successfully lay the foundations of both democracy and liberty. Who will play that role in Libya? In Syria? In Yemen?

The final thing Iraq teaches us is that while external arbiters may be necessary, they are not sufficient. We're leaving Iraq at the end of the year. Only Iraqis can sustain their democracy after we depart. The same will be true for all the other Arab peoples hoping to make this transition to self-rule. □



CartoonArts International: www.nytsyn.com/cartoons

Freedom's painful price

By NICHOLAS D. KRISTOF

© 2011 New York Times
CAIRO — Before she was arrested, tortured, stripped and subjected to a "virginity exam" — all for her pro-democracy activities — Salwa al-Housiny Gouda admired the Egyptian army.

Her odyssey is a reminder that the Egyptian revolution that exhilarated so many around the world in January and February remains unfinished. The army is as much in charge as ever, and it has taken over from the police the task of torturing dissidents. President Hosni Mubarak is gone, but in some ways Mubarakism continues.

Gouda, a 20-year-old hairdresser, is unmarried and strong-willed. She threw herself into the democracy movement early this year, sleeping in a tent on Tahrir Square, also known as Liberation Square, the movement's epicenter. Like the other activists, she



NICHOLAS D. KRISTOF

focused her rage initially on Mubarak and on the police, rather than the army. "I trusted the army," she told me, and she and other protesters often chanted slogans like, "The army and the people are one." But that was an illusion. Never squeaky clean, the army has increasingly taken over the role of domestic security from the police and seems fed

up with disorder. On March 9, it moved in to clear Tahrir Square, pulling down tents and detaining more than 190 demonstrators.

Gouda was one of about 19 women arrested that day. Though the army has denied all such accusations, her testimony is confirmed by other detainees and by human rights groups. They say that the women were taken to the Egyptian Museum, a tourist landmark beside Tahrir Square, tied up or handcuffed to the gate outside it, and then slapped, beaten and subjected to electric shocks.

"They didn't give us a chance to speak," Gouda said. "They used an electric prod whenever we tried to speak."

The prisoners were later taken to the military prosecutor's office, where the men were photographed as criminals beside a table full of clubs and Molotov cocktails supposedly confiscated from them. □

Harvick passes Jimmie Johnson to win

Kevin Harvick waves to fans after doing a burnout following his win in the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series auto race at Auto Club Speedway in Fontana, Calif., Sunday, March 27, 2011.

Associated Press

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SPORTS Aruba TODAY

On Top Of The News Email: news@arubatoday.com website: www.arubatoday.com Tel: 582-7800 Monday, March 28, 2011



Martin Laird, of Scotland, celebrates after sinking a putt on the 18th green to win the Arnold Palmer Invitational golf tournament at Bay Hill in Orlando, Fla., Sunday, March 27, 2011.

Associated Press

Laird survives early collapse to win Bay Hill

DOUG FERGUSON

AP Golf Writer

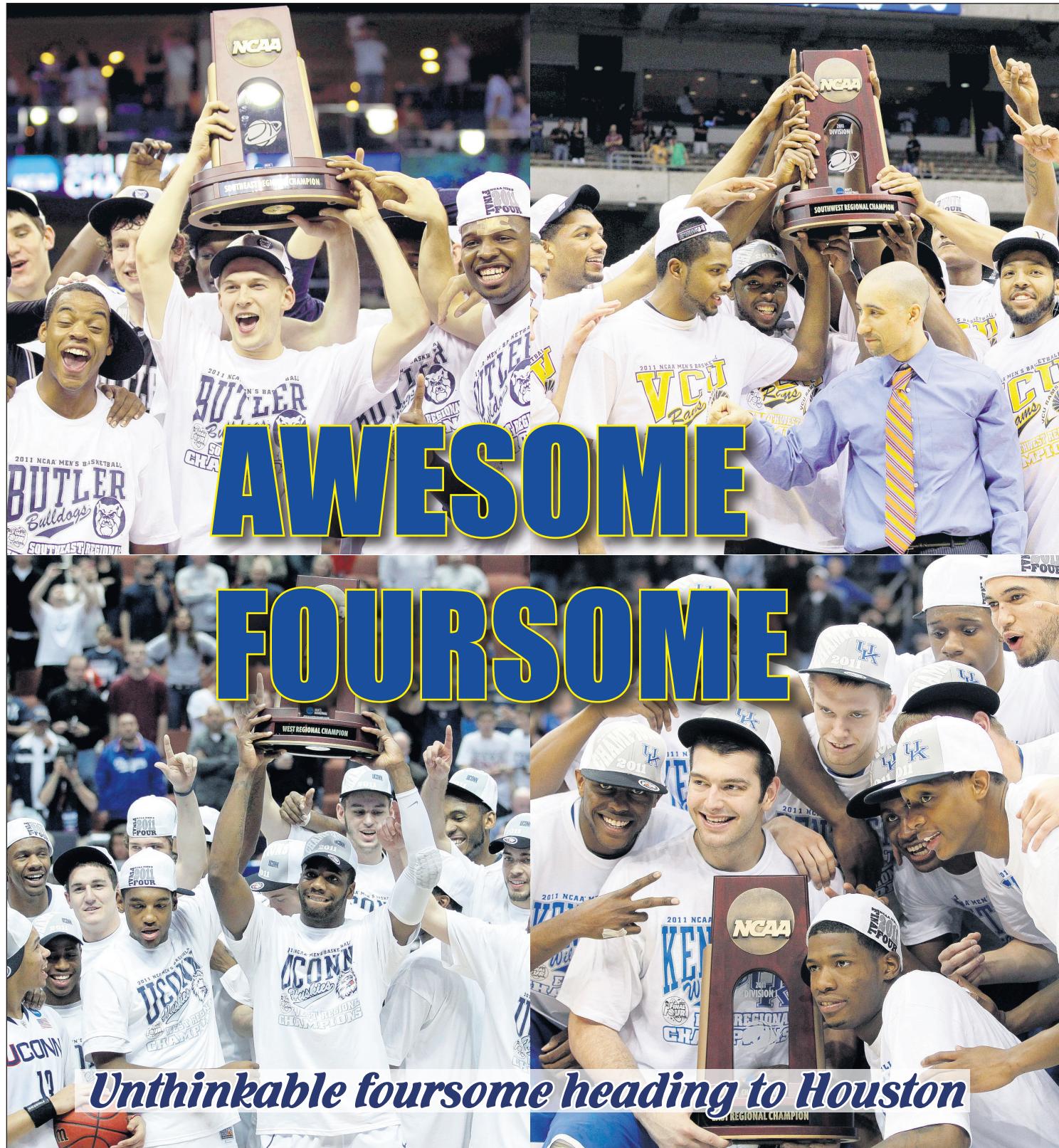
ORLANDO, Florida (AP) — Martin Laird went from a shocking collapse to become an unlikely winner Sunday at Bay Hill.

In the toughest final round on the PGA Tour this year, Laird rallied from a three-shot deficit with four holes to play with two birdies and two remarkable pars to close with a 3-over 75 and win the Arnold Palmer Invitational by one shot over hard-luck Steve Marino.

The 28-year-old Scot became the first European to win at Bay Hill in its 33-year history.

He just never imagined it would play out like this.

Continued on Page 4



Clockwise R to L: Virginia Commonwealth's team raises the Southwest regional trophy after the finals of the NCAA college basketball game against Kansas, Sunday, March 27, 2011, in San Antonio. VCU won 71-61; Kentucky's Josh Harrellson, second from left in front, joins teammates in holding the trophy after Kentucky defeated North

Carolina 76-69 in the NCAA men's college basketball tournament East regional final, Sunday, March 27, 2011, in Newark, N.J.; Connecticut's Alex Oriakhi holds the trophy celebrating with his teammates after beating Arizona 65-63 in the NCAA West regional college basketball championship game, Saturday, March 26, 2011, in Anaheim, Calif.; and

Butler players hold up the Southeast Regional Championship Trophy after their NCAA Southeast regional college basketball championship game against Butler Saturday, March 26, 2011, in New Orleans. Butler won 74-71 to advance to the Final Four.

Associated Press
NCAA Roundup
Page 3

Clijsters wins at Key Biscayne

STEVEN WINE
AP Sports Writer

KEY BISCAYNE, Florida (AP) — Kim Clijsters earned her 500th career victory by beating Maria Jose Martinez Sanchez 6-4, 4-6, 6-3 at the Sony Ericsson Open on Sunday.

Clijsters, who won the tournament in 2005 and 2010, advanced to the fourth round despite 10 double-faults and 39 unforced errors. Seeded second, Clijsters next plays No. 19 Ana Ivanovic, who won when Virginie Razzano retired trailing 2-6, 6-2, 3-0. Reigning French Open champion Francesca Schiavone, seeded fifth, beat Lourdes Dominguez Lino 6-4, 7-6 (2). No. 9 Agnieszka Radwanska eliminated No. 24 Maria Kirilenko 7-6 (2), 6-3, and No. 15 Marion Bartoli defeated Ekaterina Makarova 6-0, 6-2.

Mardy Fish beat 17th-seeded Richard Gasquet of France 6-4, 6-3 in the third round.

Fish is ranked a career-best 15th, and if he wins two more rounds he'll overtake longtime friend Andy Roddick as the top-ranked American in men's tennis. Roddick lost his opening match Saturday and is expected to drop from eighth to about 15th in the next rankings, the lowest he has been since 2002. But Fish said there's no comparison between his accomplish-



Kim Clijsters, of Belgium, slides after returning the ball to Maria Jose Martinez Sanchez, of Spain, at the Sony Ericsson Open tennis tournament in Key Biscayne, Fla., Sunday, March 27, 2011. Clijsters won 6-4, 4-6, 6-3.

Associated Press

ments and Roddick's.

"I don't think it would mean that much, to be honest," Fish said. "I certainly wouldn't feel like the top-ranked American, considering what Andy has accomplished and what I've accomplished. His career has quadrupled mine, at least. I wouldn't be the No. 1 American, really."

Roddick is a five-time Grand Slam finalist who won the 2003 U.S. Open and finished that year ranked No. 1. Fish's record in major events is barely above .500, and he has made the top 20 in the year-end rankings only twice.

But at 29, Fish is in the best condition of his career. That showed against Gasquet in the midday sun on a hot afternoon.

"Playing out there today, you can obviously see why you

need to be fit to win these matches," Fish said.

Also advancing was No. 30-seeded John Isner, who won an all-American match-up against qualifier Alex Bogomolov Jr., 6-2, 7-6 (4). Bogomolov upset Roddick in the second round, giving Isner a less daunting path to the quarterfinals.

"I didn't want to think too much about it," Isner said. "A lot of times when a draw sort of opens up, guys tend to maybe not play as well. So I'm not looking at the draw."

Juan Martin del Potro, gaining momentum in his comeback from a right wrist injury, earned his first win this year over a top-10 player by beating No. 4 Robin Soderling 6-3, 6-2. Del Potro, ranked 484th in February, will climb back into the top 45 after the tournament.

No. 6 David Ferrer defeated Somdev Devvarman 6-4, 6-2.

Fish lost to Gasquet twice in 2008, including in the first round at Wimbledon.

"He killed me," Fish recalled.

But Fish has won their past two meetings — a reflection of his improved conditioning, he said. After undergoing knee surgery in September 2009, he changed his diet and lost a lot of weight. A slimmer Fish went 40-14 in 2010, a career high for victories, and finished the year ranked 16th, another career best. □

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Alberto Contador wins Volta de Catalunya

BARCELONA, Spain (AP)

— Spanish cyclist Alberto Contador won the Volta de Catalunya on Sunday, his second straight victory since he avoided a ban following a positive doping test.

"I'm happy about the win and very happy about the effort from the team," Contador said. "It's a great satisfaction to win the anniversary edition. The Volta has a great history." Contador, who rides for the SaxoBank team, protected the lead he had established on Wednesday's mountain stage in Andorra, holding off Italian runner-up Michele Scarponi by 23 seconds.

Ireland's Daniel Martin finished third, 35 seconds off the pace.

"It has been a tough race and we had to control it with several mountains on our way," said Contador. "The last four days have been very hard. Wednesday I felt strong and managed to win on the Andorra climb."

Samuel Dumoulin edged a pack of chasers to claim the final 77.4-mile stage from Parets del Valles to Barcelona in 2 hours, 33 minutes and 55 seconds.

On Thursday, the International Cycling Union decided to



Saxo Bank's cyclist and Spain's three-time Tour de France champion Alberto Contador celebrates with the trophy after winning the Volta de Catalunya cycling race in Barcelona, Spain, Sunday, March 27, 2011.

Associated Press

challenge Contador's acquittal by the Spanish cycling federation for a positive test for clenbuterol while winning his third Tour de France last year. The Court of Arbitration for Sport said it's aiming to give a verdict before this year's Tour de France starts July 2. Contador won the Vuelta of Murcia earlier this month and was fourth in the Tour of the Algarve after being cleared of a proposed one-year ban. □

Frank Schleck wins Criterium International

PORTO-VECCHIO, France (AP) — Frank Schleck of Luxembourg held on to his lead in a 7-kilometer flat time trial to win the two-day Criterium International race in Corsica on Sunday. The Leopard-Trek rider took 12th place in the short third and final stage in Porto-Vecchio, finishing 24 seconds behind Andreas Kloeden of Germany.

"I'm really happy to win this race," Schleck said, after posting his first victory of the season. "I was pretty confident before the time trial, but I was fearing a technical problem or maybe I would have bad legs. I'm not a specialist, but everything went fine."

Schleck set up his win in Saturday's mountainous stage when he dropped his rival on the Col de l'Ospedale climb.

Kloeden clocked 8 minutes and 46 seconds to win ahead of Briton Bradley Wiggins, who trailed four seconds behind. Jakob Fuglsang of Denmark was third, 10 seconds back.

Vasil Kiryienka of Belarus, Schleck's main rival in the overall standings, finished 8th to cut his deficit from 20 to 13 seconds. Rein Taaramae of Estonia was third, 30 seconds behind.

"Frank did a very nice time trial today," said Leopard Trek sports director Kim Andersen. □

March Madness: Unthinkable foursome heading to Houston

By EDDIE PELLS

AP National Writer

Even in the unpredictable, anything-goes world of March Madness, this is a Final Four nobody saw coming.

Kentucky, Connecticut, Butler and Virginia Commonwealth — the improbable, the implausible, the unthinkable and the downright unimaginable.

In one game in Houston next Saturday, No. 4 seed Kentucky will play No. 3 Connecticut — not a completely absurd thought as a Final Four matchup, though hardly a popular pick given their up-and-down regular seasons.

In the other game, it will be No. 11 Virginia Commonwealth against No. 8 Butler — the team that was almost universally panned when its name was called on Selection Sunday against the defending national runner-up from a 4,500-student campus whose amazing success story had supposedly run its course.

"It never gets old," Bulldogs senior Matt Howard said.

Nor does the NCAA tournament, the three-week office pool that places the so-called experts on even footing with those who fill out brackets because they like a team's colors or its mascot.

Anything goes. Anyone can win. And never has that been more true than this year.

Four teams with a combined 37 losses.

Four teams whose combined seeding equals 26, breaking the record of 22 in 2000.

Not a single No. 1 seed for only the third time since seeding began in 1979 and, according to STATS LLC., the first time that no 1 or 2 seed will be there.

ESPN, which sponsors one of the country's biggest bracket tournaments, said that out of 5.9 million entries, only two had this foursome making its way to Houston.

Kentucky is the new favorite in Vegas, at 8-5. VCU is listed at 7-1 — the longshot in the field, but still quite a bit better than 2500-1, which is where the Rams were listed at the start of the season.

"I think what it does as much as anything, it just puts a spin

on the NCAA tournament," said Kansas coach Bill Self after his top-seeded team lost 71-61 to VCU. "It's wild. ... Because seeds are so overrated. It's about matchups. And their players could play for us any day."

VCU (28-11) got up early on Kansas on Sunday and never looked back, an upset winner in a tournament that's all about underdogs.

"Our guys have done a phenomenal job of putting all the doubters aside, putting all the people that didn't believe in us aside and going out and doing their job," VCU coach Shaka Smart said.

The Rams are the third No. 11 seed to make the Final Four and the first since George Mason in 2006, also of the Colonial Athletic Conference. But the Rams are the first ever that will need to win seven games — not the usual six — to win the title. They were one of the last at-large teams to make the newfangled 68-team field. They played in the new "First Four" — an extra round that was added as part of the NCAA's new \$10.8 billion TV deal.

Now they're in the Final Four. They'll play Butler (27-9), which slumped through big chunks of this season, a somewhat predictable result after what was supposed to be a once-in-a-lifetime trip to the Final Four last season, played a scant six miles from their Indianapolis campus.

This year, the destination is Reliant Stadium — 1,036 miles away. The Bulldogs are once again proving that all it takes is good players — not a conference, a big school or gobs of money — to compete on the biggest stage in college sports.

Last season, in one of the most epic finishes in Final Four history, Gordon Hayward's half-court shot banked off glass, nicked off the rim and barely bounded out to leave the Bulldogs two points short of Duke for the national title.

It was a heartbreaker, but maybe one that set the Bulldogs up for a repeat. They've won one game by one, another by two and another by three on this year's road to the Final



From left to right, Kansas players Thomas Robinson, Marcus Morris and Markieff Morris react in the final moments against Virginia Commonwealth at the Southwest regional final game in the NCAA college basketball tournament on Sunday, March 27, 2011, in San Antonio. VCU won 71-61.

Associated Press

Four. They beat Florida 74-71 in overtime Saturday to make their second straight trip.

"I think it (last year) helps you with knowing how you need to prepare and what you should do and what you should not do," Howard said. "I think that will help us."

Though UConn and Kentucky each struggled at times this season, they've had Final Four pedigrees for years (decades when it comes to the Wildcats) and they lived up to them this month.

Connecticut was 9-9 in the Big East this season but won an unprecedented five games in five days in the conference tournament to win its first big trophy of March. The big question was whether the Huskies, led by one of the nation's best players in Kemba Walker, would have enough energy to keep things going in the NCAA.

Short answer: Yes.

They held off Arizona 65-63 on Saturday and are in the Final Four for the fourth time since 1999.

"I've been fortunate over 39 years to have a lot of teams do a lot of different things," coach Jim Calhoun said, "but never could I imagine the team winning nine games in

tournament play in 19 days."

To win No. 10, UConn (30-9) must beat Kentucky, a team led by three freshmen that might, nonetheless, have its biggest star on the bench. Coach John Calipari joined Rick Pitino as the only coaches to lead three different programs to the Final Four.

Brandon Knight, Doron Lamb and Terrence Jones are the three freshmen who helped the Wildcats (29-8) get to the Final Four for the first time

since their 1998 national title team. They beat North Carolina 76-69 on Sunday.

"We got Kentucky back," sophomore forward Josh Harrelson said. "A lot of people really didn't think we would be the team we are. We know we struggled early in the season, lost a couple of close games that we should have won. And you know, we really pulled it together as a team. And, you know, we're back now." □

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MARS NEEDS MOMS 3D

daily: 12:00 - 2:00

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matinee: 12:00 - 2:00

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late show: 12:00 - 2:15

PG

BATTLE LOS ANGELES

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matinee: 12:00

SP PG-13

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Sandra Gal wins Kia Classic



Sandra Gal, of Germany, celebrates her first tour victory in the LPGA Kia Classic golf tournament at Industry Hills Golf Club in Industry, Calif., Sunday, March 27, 2011. Associated Press

INDUSTRY, California (AP) — Sandra Gal won the Kia Classic on Sunday to become the second German winner in LPGA Tour history, beating second-ranked Jiyai Shin with a 2-foot birdie putt on the final hole. The 25-year-old Gal made the winning putt after

Shin's 5-foot birdie attempt caught the right edge and spun out. Gal closed with a 2-under 71 to finish at 16-under 276 on the Industry Hills Golf Club course at Pacific Palms. She set up the winning birdie with a wedge shot on the par-5 18th.

BAY HILL
cont. from Page B1

Laird's two-shot lead was gone at the turn, and when he pulled a bunker shot into the water on No. 11 to make double bogey, he already was 5-over par for his round and fading quickly. But a day of survival for everyone else turned into a revival for Laird. After a bogey on the par-3 14th to fall three shots behind Marino, Laird holed a 20-foot birdie putt on the 15th, an 18-foot birdie putt on the 16th, saved par from behind the 17th green and two-putted from just inside 90 feet on the final hole.

It was the highest score in the final round by a Bay Hill champion, and it took Laird's best golf to do that on a course that at times made it feel like the U.S. Open had moved to late March. No one in the last three groups broke par, and those six players were a combined 19-over par. Laird needed some help from Ma-

Tina Fischer is the only other Germany champion. She won the 2001 Asahi Ryokken International.

Shin, an eight-time winner on the LPGA Tour, finished with a 73. Cristie Kerr shot a 66 to tie for third with I.K. Kim (70) at 11 under. Top-ranked Yani Tseng (67) and Na Yeon Choi (73) were 9 under, and Michelle Wie (70) was another stroke back along with Marcy Hart (65) and Mindy Kim (71). Shin took a one-stroke lead over Gal into the final round, but dropped two strokes back with three bogeys on the front nine.

The South Korean pulled even on the par-3 13th, making a birdie while Gal had her lone bogey of the day. Shin took a one-stroke lead with a birdie on the par-3 15th, and Gal countered with a birdie on the par-4 16th to set up the finish. On 18, Gal's wedge shot hit past the hole and spun back, nearly going in the hole. Gal earned \$255,000 in the tournament, the tour's first event in the Los Angeles area in six years. □

rino, who played beautifully until the last four holes. Marino took bogey from a plugged lie in the bunker short of the 15th green, then made double bogey from a plugged lie in the sand short of the 17th hole. He went from a one-shot lead to a two-shot deficit when Laird birdied the 16th in the group behind. Marino at least gave himself a chance on the last hole with a gutsy play over the water to 8 feet for birdie and a 72. It was the third close call this year for Marino, who has yet to win on the PGA Tour. Justin Rose closed with a 68 and tied for third with David Toms and Marc Leishman, who needed to win to get into the Masters.

Tiger Woods, a six-time winner at Bay Hill, was poised for a second straight top 10 until he made bogey from the bunker on the 17th and hit his approach into the water on No. 18 for double bogey and a 72. In his final tournament before the Masters, Woods tied for

24th, seven shots behind. Phil Mickelson dropped three shots on the last five holes for a 73 to also finish in a tie for 24th. Laird won for the second time in his PGA Tour career, and the record will show that he won for the first time in three tries when going into the final round atop the leaderboard. But it wasn't that simple. Not even close. Palmer, the tournament host, prefers a stern test at his beloved Bay Hill, and that's what he got, especially in the afternoon when the wind picked up and the course dried out even more under a hot sun.

"The back-nine pins, they are all bogey and double-bogey pins — they are not birdie pins," Mickelson said when he finished. "The last eight holes are holes that you have to play 50 feet away if you're playing smart." Marino went at the flag on the 15th, tucked right behind the bunker, and his ball plugged in the soft sand. He blasted out to 35 feet

Paul Lawrie wins Andalucian Open



Scotland's Paul Lawrie reacts after the win the Andalucia 2011 Open golf tournament at Parador de Golf, in Málaga, southern Spain, Sunday, March 27, 2011.

Associated Press

MALAGA, Spain (AP) — Paul Lawrie won the Andalucian Open on Sunday for his first European Tour victory since 2002 and sixth overall after holding off Johan Edfors of Sweden by one stroke.

The 42-year-old Scot shot a level-par 70 to total 12-under 268 and become the oldest golfer to win the event.

"It's been a long time — 2002

seems a hell of a time ago," Lawrie said.

"I've had a few second places in there, but all of a sudden we're there again."

The 1999 British Open winner hit only one bogey in the first three rounds, but bogeyed three of his first five holes Sunday before recovering with four birdies on the back nine.

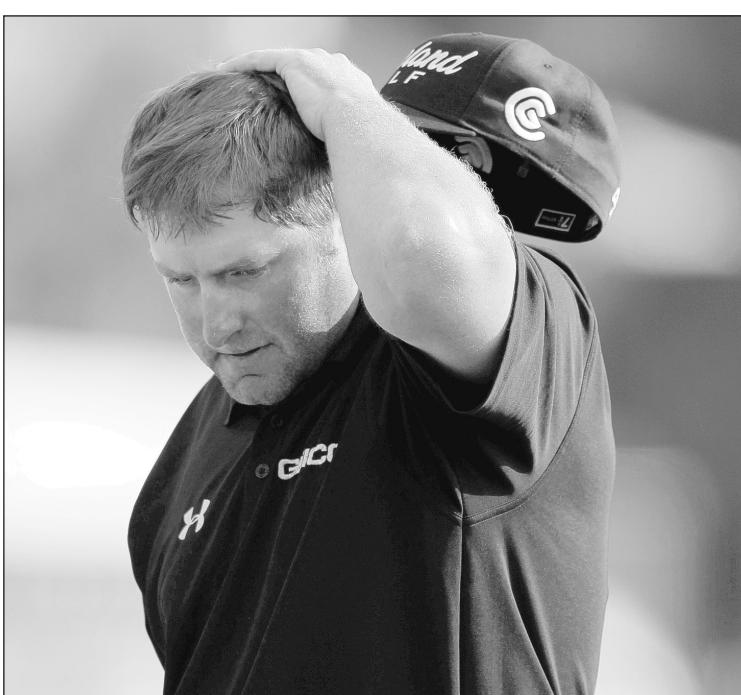
"I must say that I felt under control even when I was above par at the start, and when you get into that attitude good things happen," he said.

"I started hitting beautiful shots on the back nine. I birdied (Nos.) 10, 11 and 12, and then did a great up and down on 14 for birdie just at the right moment."

Edfors shot a 68, including a bogey on the 15th.

Kenneth Ferrie began the day one stroke behind Lawrie, the overnight leader, after equaling the European Tour record by shooting a 60 in the third round.

But the Englishman shot a 75 on Sunday to finish at 274. □



Steve Marino walks off the 17th green after a double bogey during the final round of the Arnold Palmer Invitational golf tournament at Bay Hill in Orlando, Fla., Sunday, March 27, 2011.

Associated Press

and made bogey. Then came the 17th, and a 6-iron that he thought was good all the way until the crowd groaned.

He blasted out over the green, putted up the slope to 5 feet and missed the bogey putt.

"I played so well all day, and you know, one hiccup on 17 cost me the tournament," he said. Laird finished at 8-under 280, the highest winning score since Ben Crenshaw shot 280 in 1993. □

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Harvick wins at Fontana on final turn pass

JOHN MARSHALL

AP Sports Writer

FONTANA, California (AP) — Kevin Harvick overtook California king Jimmie Johnson on the final turn at Auto Club Speedway Sunday to win NASCAR's Sprint Cup event after trailing the entire race.

"I wish we could just go out there and wear 'em out one day, just not have to worry about waiting until the last lap," Harvick said. "It does kind of seem we wait until the last moments to really get going. It's probably somewhat of a bad habit I have, but I guess it worked out."

Kyle Busch had the dominant car most of the day and led a race-high 151 laps, including off a restart with nine laps left. Johnson, a five-time winner Fontana, had the late burst, chasing down Busch for the lead with two laps left.

However it was Harvick — as he always seems to do — who nailed the finish. He started 24th and gradually worked his way to the front, pulling up behind Johnson after getting past Busch.

Taking advantage of a small gap to the outside, Harvick made his move on Johnson going into Turn 3, then completed it coming around Turn 4. Ahead going down the last straight, he finished off to take the checkers for the 15th time in his career.

"I really felt good when they had that restart because I knew his car was really fast on the long run," said Richard Childress, owner of Harvick's No. 29 car. "I knew if they didn't get too far out in front of us, we'd have a shot. All we needed was to get him

side-by-side and start racing. That gave Kevin a chance to catch them and he made the right move going into 3."

There was not much change up front in the early stages due to a lack of cautions; the opening 75 laps came under green to set a track record. Overnight rain, which lingered as mist until a couple of hours before the race, also played a role. Drivers who were able to get the setup right were able to get out front and stay there while everyone else tinkered. Busch had a rough start to his Sprint Cup weekend, forced to a backup car after sliding into the wall on his first practice lap on Friday, but still managed to qualify eighth.

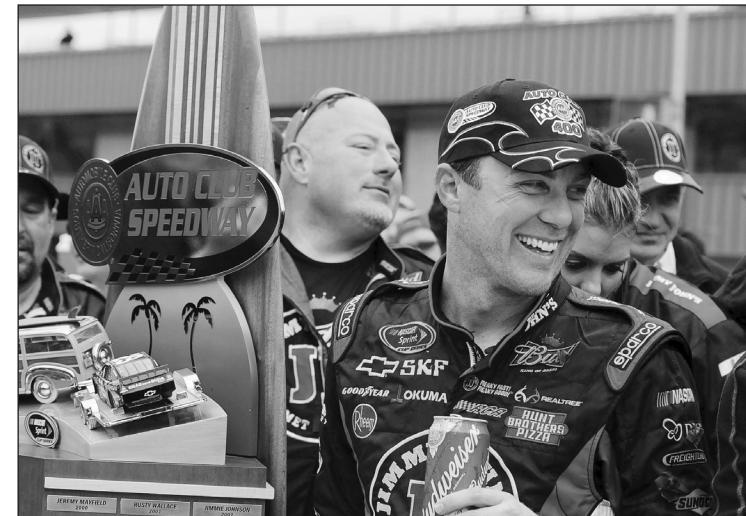
Busch took his first lead on Lap 22 and lost it a few times

on green-flag pit stops, but was back in front within a few laps, pulling away on each of the four restarts.

He just didn't have enough left after the leaders stayed out on the last caution, spoiling his chance to pull off the NASCAR weekend sweep two weeks in a row.

"It's real unfortunate and disappointing and frustrating all in one that we weren't able to seal the deal today," Busch said. "You ask a little bit more from your race car at the last moments and it just doesn't have anything left to give. We were just a sitting duck waiting for those guys to go around us."

Johnson looked as if he were going to notch his fourth win in six starts at California. □



Kevin Harvick smiles after winning the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series race at Auto Club Speedway in Fontana, Calif., Sunday, March 27, 2011.

Associated Press

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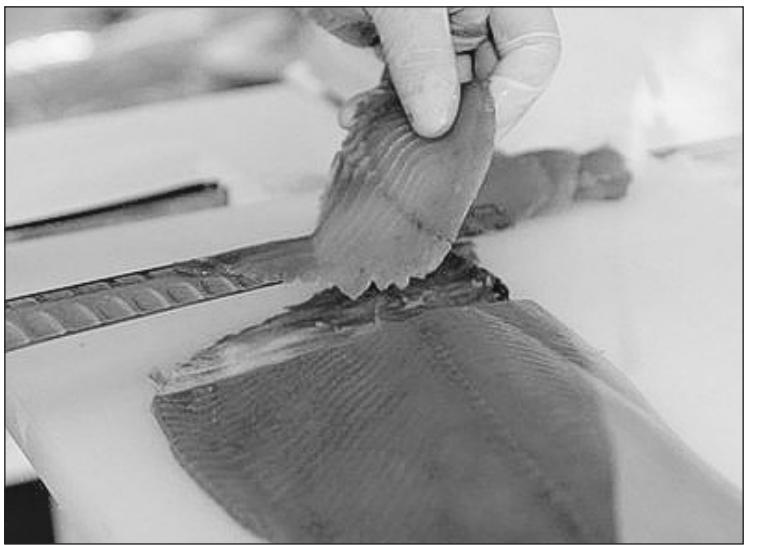

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Eskimo study suggests fish oils curb diseases



Chef slices smoked salmon

WASHINGTON— A study of Alaska's Yup'ik Eskimos, who consume 20 times more omega-3 fats from fish than most Americans, suggests these oils can prevent obesity-related illness such as diabetes and heart disease, researchers said Friday.

The researchers analyzed data from 330 people living in the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta region of southwest Alaska. Although 70 percent of the population was overweight or obese, they did not show the same risk factors for heart disease and had a lower prevalence of diabetes than the overall US population.

The fats the researchers were interested in measuring were those found in salmon, sardines and other fatty fish docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) and eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA). In participants with low blood levels of these fats, obesity strongly increased heart disease risk measured by triglycerides and C-reactive protein, a measure of overall body inflammation. Additionally, the researchers said that although the Yup'ik Eskimos have overweight/obesity levels similar to those in the US overall, their prevalence of type 2 diabetes is significantly lower 3.3 percent versus 7.7 percent.

"Because Yup'ik Eskimos have a traditional diet that includes large amounts of fatty fish and have a prevalence of overweight or obesity that is similar to that of the general US population, this offered a

unique opportunity to study whether omega-3 fats change the association between obesity and chronic disease risk," said Zeina Makhoul, a researcher at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center and lead author.

"Interestingly, we found that obese persons with high blood levels of omega-3 fats had triglyceride and CRP concentrations that did not differ from those of normal-weight persons," Makhoul said.

"It appeared that high intakes of omega-3-rich seafood protected Yup'ik Eskimos from some of the harmful effects of obesity." The study was led by researchers at Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center and conducted in collaboration with the Center for Alaska Native Health Research at the University of Alaska-Fairbanks. It published online March 23 in the European Journal of Clinical Nutrition.

For the study, the participants provided blood samples and health information via in-person interviews and questionnaires. Diet was assessed by asking participants what they ate in the past 24 hours and asking them to keep a food log. The researchers said however that further studies would be needed to make specific recommendations on diets or supplements. "If the results of such a trial were positive, it would strongly suggest that omega-3 fats could help prevent obesity-related diseases such as heart disease and diabetes," Makhoul said. □

Nicotine raises blood sugar levels



Cigarettes

By Serena Gordon
Associated Press

Smoking is damaging to everyone's health, but the nicotine in cigarettes may be even more deadly for people who have diabetes. In lab experiments, researchers discovered that nicotine raised blood sugar levels, and the more nicotine that was present, the higher the blood sugar levels were. Higher blood sugar levels are linked to an increased risk of complications from diabetes, such as eye and kidney disease. "Smoking is really harmful for diabetics. It's even more harmful to them than to a non-diabetic," said study author Xiao-Chuan Liu, an associate professor in the department of chemistry at California State Polytechnic University in Pomona. "This study should encourage diabetics to quit smoking completely, and to realize that it's the nicotine that's raising [blood sugar levels]."

For that reason, it's also important to limit the use of nicotine replacement products, such as nicotine patches, Liu said.

"If you're using them for a short period of time to quit smoking, that's OK. But, if you still have this addiction to nicotine and are using this product long-term, it will do harm. Don't use electronic cigarettes or nicotine gum for a long time. You need to stop nicotine intake," he advised. Liu is scheduled to present his

substance found in cigarette smoke, contributed to higher blood sugar levels, Liu and his colleagues added equal amounts of glucose to samples of human red blood cells. They also added varying levels of nicotine to each sample of red blood cells for either one day or two days.

They then tested the hemoglobin A1C (HbA1C) levels of the samples. HbA1C is a measure of what percentage of red blood cells have glucose molecules attached to them. In diabetes management, the HbA1C -- sometimes referred to just as A1C test gives doctors an idea of average blood sugar levels for the past three months or so. Most people with diabetes strive for a level of 7 percent or less, based on American Diabetes Association guidelines.

The researchers found that nicotine raised HbA1C. The smallest dose increased HbA1C levels by 8.8 percent. The highest dose after two days of nicotine treatment increased blood sugar levels by 34.5 percent. □

Keep Safety in Mind When Cleaning House, Experts Advise



Cleaning lady

With spring-cleaning season here, the American Cleaning Institute reminds adults to protect family members and pets from accidental poisoning. In conjunction with National Poison Prevention Week experts offer advice that should be followed year-round:

Never assume a cabinet is too high for a child to reach. Cleaning supplies, medicines, cosmetics, chemicals and other products that can cause poisoning should be stored in cabinets with child-safety locks. Properly close child-resistant packages after use. Keep in mind that "child-resistant" isn't the same as "child-proof" and is not a substitute for storing products locked away from children. Always read and follow the directions on product labels. Pay special heed to products with labels that include "Caution," "Warning," "Danger" or "Poison." □

Nintendo ready to take 3-D gaming to mass market

By BARBARA ORTUTAY
AP Technology Writer

NEW YORK — With the Nintendo 3DS, the Japanese video game company is betting that it can once again nudge mass entertainment in a new direction, just as it did nearly five years ago when it launched the Wii with its innovative motion-based controller.

This time, though, the competition from other devices is tougher.

The handheld 3DS, which goes on sale in the U.S. on Sunday for \$250, lets users play 3-D games without wearing special glasses. It also takes 3-D photos. This summer, the 3DS will play 3-D movies streamed from Netflix on its 3.5-inch screen.

Reggie Fils-Aime, the president of Nintendo's U.S. arm, calls it "the first mass-market 3-D device."

Nintendo's handheld gaming systems have been wildly popular since the days of the Game Boy, but in recent years people have grown accustomed (and sometimes addicted) to playing games on their smartphones. "Angry Birds," for example, is played by 40 million people a month.

And both AT&T Inc. and Sprint Nextel Corp. have announced they'll be selling smartphones with 3-D screens soon.

Fils-Aime acknowledges that consumers have a wide range of entertainment options. Nintendo, he says, must provide better entertainment experiences so that people keep flocking to its games and devices.

So far, they are. While demand for the handheld DS has slowed over the past year, video game analyst Jesse Divnich of Electronic Entertainment Design and Research said that's only because people have been holding out

for the 3DS. As of Dec. 31, Nintendo had sold about 145 million units of the DS in all its iterations worldwide. Divnich thinks demand for the 3DS will be more brisk during its first year on sale than for previous iterations, such as the DSi, which went on sale in 2008.

The Wii, which hit store shelves in 2006 for \$250 (it is now \$200), was often sold out or in short supply as recently as last February. It's not clear yet whether this will be the case with 3DS, but retailers say demand has been strong based on the number of pre-orders they received. Tony Bartel, the president of GameStop Corp., the world's largest video game store chain, said the company is "working every day with Nintendo" to ensure that they can meet demand.

Wedbush Morgan analyst Michael Pachter said Nintendo will sell "as many as they can make" over the next 12 months. While the earthquake and tsunami that devastated Japan will likely affect supplies, he called an estimate of 16 million units "very fair." The 3DS isn't Nintendo's first foray into 3-D gaming. In 1995, it launched the Virtual Boy, which required bulky headgear and displayed all images in red. It bombed and Nintendo soon discontinued it. But it didn't give up on 3-D. The technology used to create 3-D images on the 3DS is not new. Called a "parallax barrier" LCD screen, it works as if two sets of thin blinds were laid over the screen, so that your eyes each see a different version of the image. Your brain then puts them together, creating the 3-D effect. Because it only works if the viewer is at a certain place in relation to the screen, this technology is better suited to

hand-held devices than TV sets.

As entertainment technology, 3-D doesn't have a long track record of appeal to the mass market. It's been possible to play computer games in 3-D for years, with the help of glasses, but they have never caught on. People are willing to pay extra to see 3-D movies, but they haven't helped overall box office receipts.

Veteran game designer Hideki Konno, who helped develop the 3DS, said being able to see games in 3-D makes it easier to comprehend distances while playing.

"You will find it easier to grasp the width, height and the depth of the gaming world," he said in an email message translated from the Japanese.

Ji Soo Yim, 20, is a fan of Nintendo but she said she might wait to buy the 3DS. She tried it out recently at the Nintendo World store in New York City while visiting on spring break from Grinnell, Iowa.

"It was supposed to be 3-D, but it looks like it's going to be a headache," she said.

Nintendo notes that the 3-D effect is adjustable (and can be turned off completely, too), which could help those prone to headaches from 3-D. Nintendo hopes that, along with the lack of glasses, will make the 3DS appealing to a broad range of people.

It also helps that people are familiar with 3-D technology from movies. Ross Rubin, an analyst for market research firm NPD Group, thinks consumers will eventually adopt 3-D TVs in their homes just as they bought high-definition screens. The 3DS is one sign that the use of 3-D is spreading through the electronics industry, he said, though he noted that 3-D TV sales haven't been as strong as some manufacturers have expected. □



A Nintendo 3DS is shown in this photograph in New York, Friday, March 25, 2011.

Associated Press

OMG! Online abbreviations make the OED

JILL LAWLESS
Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — OMG! The exclamatory online abbreviation has won the approval of the Oxford English Dictionary. The term — short for "Oh my God" or "Oh my gosh" — is one of dozens of new entries in the authoritative reference book's latest online update. Other Internet-inspired expressions given the stamp of approval include LOL, "laughing out loud"; IMHO, "in my humble opinion"; and BFF, "best friends forever."

Dictionary compilers said that although the terms are associated with modern electronic communications, some are surprisingly old. The first confirmed use of "OMG" was in a letter in 1917. "Things people think are new words normally have a longer history," Graeme Diamond, the dictionary's principal editor for new words, said Friday.

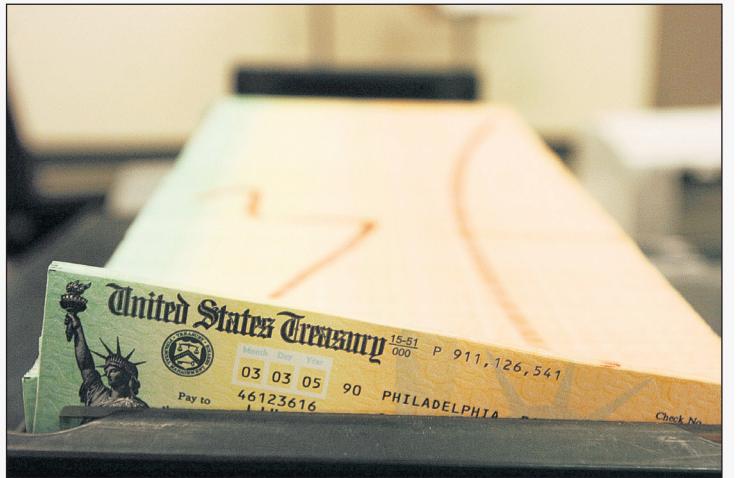
"Who knows how many people from 1917 onwards were using that term, in correspondence that we just don't have access to. With the advent of

the mass media we have access to much more personal information." That helps explain a flood of new terms from the online world, including ego-surfing — the practice of searching for your own name on the Internet — and dot bomb, a failed Internet company.

Not all the new abbreviations originated online. One new entry is wag, for "wives and girlfriends." First used in 2002 to describe the female partners of the England soccer team, it is now used to denote the glamorous and extravagant female partners of male celebrities. "By our standards WAG is a real rocket of a word," Diamond said. "To go from being coined in 2002 to being included in 2011 is quite unusual." The new update includes about 900 new words and meanings, from "flat white" — a milky espresso-based drink originating from Australia and New Zealand to "muffin top," defined as "a protuberance of flesh above the waistband of a tight pair of trousers." □



THANKS FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTION



This Feb. 2005 file photo shows trays of printed social security checks waiting to be mailed from the U.S. Treasury. The government is projecting a slight cost-of-living adjustment for Social Security benefits next year, the first increase since 2009. But for most beneficiaries, rising Medicare premiums threaten to wipe out any increase in payments, leaving them without a raise for a third straight year.

Medicare rise could mean no Social Security COLA

By STEPHEN OHLEMACHER
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Millions of retired and disabled people in the United States had better brace for another year with no increase in Social Security payments. The government is projecting a slight cost-of-living adjustment for Social Security benefits next year, the first increase since 2009. But for most beneficiaries, rising Medicare premiums threaten to wipe out any increase in payments, leaving them without a raise for a third straight year. About 45 million people — one in seven in the country — receive both Medicare and Social Security. By law, beneficiaries have their Medicare Part B premiums, which cover doctor visits, deducted from their Social Security payments each month. When Medicare premiums rise more than Social Security payments, millions of people living on fixed incomes don't get raises. On the other hand, most don't get pay cuts, either, because a hold-harmless provision prevents higher Part B premiums from reducing Social Security payments for most people. □

Chinese refiner's 2010 profit grows 13 percent

NEW YORK — Sinopec, Asia's largest refiner by capacity, says its profit increased more than 13 percent last year as China's expanding economy increased demand for oil. The company, also known as China Petroleum & Chemical Corp., said Sunday its net profit grew 13.7 percent to \$71.8 billion yuan (US\$10.9 billion), or 0.82 yuan(12 cents) per share, based on international financial reporting standards. The company's board of directors recommended a final dividend of 0.13 yuan (one cent) per share, for a full 2010 dividend of 0.21 (3 cents) per share. Sinopec said it processed 211 million tons of crude oil last year, up 13.2 percent year-over-year, and produced 124 million tons of refined oil products, an increase of 9.4 percent from the previous year. The company attributed the expansion to increased capacity, China's growing economy and higher prices for petroleum and related products. □

BUSINESS Aruba TODAY

As Japan shutdowns drag on, auto crisis worsens

ELAINE KURTENBACH
SHARON SILKE CARTY
AP Business Writers

TOKYO (AP) — The auto industry disruptions triggered by Japan's earthquake and tsunami are about to get worse.

In the weeks ahead, car buyers will have difficulty finding the model they want in certain colors, thousands of auto plant workers will likely be told to stay home, and companies such as Toyota, Honda and others will lose billions of dollars in revenue. More than two weeks since the natural disaster, inventories of crucial car supplies — from computer chips to paint pigments — are dwindling fast as Japanese factories that make them struggle to restart.

Because parts and supplies are shipped by slow-moving boats, the real drop-off has yet to be felt by factories in the U.S., Europe and Asia. That will come by the middle of April. "This is the biggest impact ever in the history of the automobile industry," said Koji Endo, managing director at Advanced Research Japan in Tokyo.

Much of Japan's auto industry — the second largest supplier of cars in the world — remains idle. Few plants were seriously damaged by the quake, but with supplies of water and electricity fleeting, no one can say when factories will crank up. Some auto analysts said it could be as late as this summer.

Hitachi Automotive Systems, which makes parts such as airflow sensors and drive control systems, is waiting for its suppliers to restart while dealing with its own problems. Its plants are without water and gas, and have rolling electricity blackouts. Workers are repairing crumpled ceilings,

fallen walls and cleaning up shattered glass. A spokesman said he doesn't know when its plants will reopen.

The uncertainty has suppliers, automakers and dealers scrambling. And it exposes the vulnerability of the world's most complex supply chain, where 3,000 parts go into single car or truck. Each one of those parts is made up of hundreds of other pieces supplied by multiple companies. All it takes is for one part to go missing or arrive late, and a vehicle can't be built.

When General Motors briefly shut a pickup plant in Shreveport, Louisiana, due to a lack of parts, it caused the partial closing of a New York factory that supplies engines for those trucks. Sweden's Volvo has warned that its production could be disrupted because it is down to a week's worth of some parts.

Car buyers will soon see higher prices and fewer choices. Some car colors will be harder to get because a paint pigment factory in Japan was damaged and shut production. As a result, Ford is telling dealers to stop ordering "tuxedo black" models of its F-150 pickup and Expedition and Navigator SUVs. It's also shifting away from some reds. The moves are precautionary, Ford said. Chrysler told dealers it was temporarily restricting orders of vehicles in 10 colors.

That worries some dealers, especially when popular colors like black could be in short supply.

"It's hard enough to sell a \$60,000 Navigator in this economy," said Fortunes O'Neal, general manager at Park Cities Ford in Dallas. "We don't want to have to tell customers, 'You've got to pick another color.'" Customers also face rising



In this Oct. 1, 2003 file photo, brand new Ford Mondeo cars are parked on the parking lot of the Ford Motor Company plant in Genk, Belgium

Associated Press

Latest developments in the auto industry following Japan's March 11 earthquake and tsunami. The twin disaster and subsequent damage to nuclear reactors have disrupted the flow of auto parts and cars around the world.

In Japan:

— Toyota Motor Corp., the world's No. 1 automaker, plans to restart production of the Prius and two Lexus hybrids — the HS 250h and CT 200h — on March 28. The company is expected to keep most of its other plants closed into next week, according to IHS' Global Insight Automotive Report.

— Honda Motor Co. extended a shutdown of car production at its Saitama and Suzuka factories until April 3. It will restart motorcycle production on March 28. "Honda's core supplier base could be most affected by the disaster," according to IHS.

— Nissan Motor Co. resumed production of the Nissan Leaf at its Oppama and Zama plants, but said the ability to keep producing the cars will depend on the frequency of rolling blackouts.

In the U.S. □

prices for models like Toyota's Prius, which is made only in Japan. Fears of falling supply have some dealers driving a hard bargain with customers who want the fuel-efficient hybrid as gasoline prices rise. Recent discounts of 5 to 10 percent on that car are disappearing.

Japanese carmakers, who have shut most of their domestic plants, are warning that some of their overseas factories will stop running, too, in an effort to conserve supplies. Toyota and Honda expect shutdowns at North American plants. Honda said production could be interrupted after April 1. Even though most of its parts are sourced in the region, a few critical ones still come from Japan.

Goldman Sachs estimates the shutdowns are costing the Japan automakers \$200 million a day, which adds up to \$2.8 billion for just the past two weeks. Each week of continued shutdowns costs \$1.4 billion. By comparison, Toyota made \$2.3 billion in all of 2010, and its sudden acceleration recalls cost \$2 billion. The cost of damage from Japan's natural disaster could dwarf that recall, which was considered Toyota's biggest crisis ever.

Much depends on how many spare components automakers have in stock — which is probably very few. Japan's automakers spearheaded lean manufacturing, under which parts are delivered to plants the same day they are used. Automakers are still receiving parts that were put on ships weeks ago, but those supplies will dwindle.

After the earthquake hit, car companies began the long process of figuring out which parts are in danger of running out. □

Stock markets are more predictable than you think



Specialist William Bott works at his post on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange Thursday, March 17, 2011.

Associated Press

of Chernobyl, the Dow recovered in a day. In that context, last week's stock recovery took slightly longer than average. There's another clue that the rebound is for real, in spite of the recent dips and leaps in the market. It can be found in the 50-day moving average of the S&P 500, which measures the average value of the index over the most recent 50 days.

Comparing an index level to its moving average shows what general direction the market is taking, without the interference of short-term spikes and plunges. Analysts fretted when the S&P 500 fell below its 50-day moving average on March 10. On Thursday, it climbed back above the average.

But the moving average can also signal longer-term trends. Before March 10, the S&P 500 had stayed above its 50-day moving average for more than 100 days. That has only happened five other times since 1980, says Ryan Detrick, strategist for Schaeffer's Investment Research. After each of those blocks ended, the index rose by an average of 6 percent in the following three months. Four out of those five times, it rose an average of 3.3 percent after just a month.

Then there's the macroeconomic view. Barry Knapp, chief economist for Barclay's Capital, says stocks are probably safe from a steep drop for the next six months. He expects the economy to follow the patterns of the last three recessions.

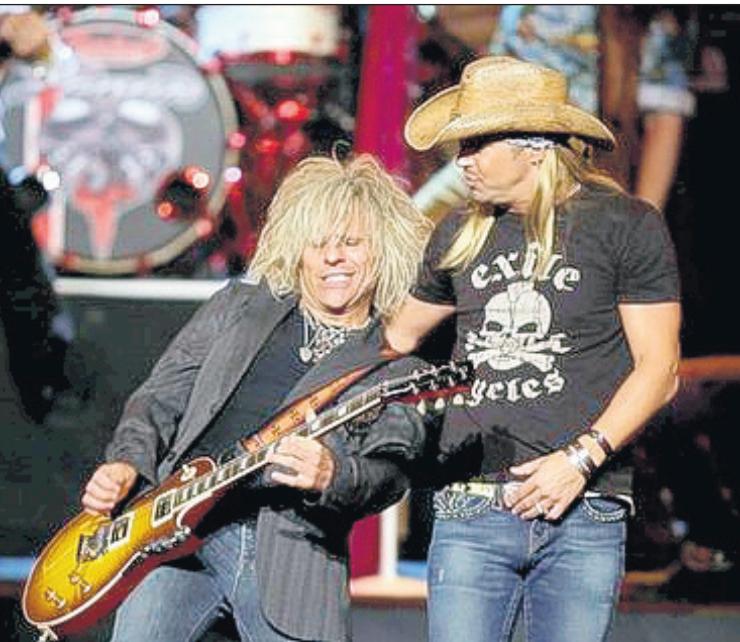
In the last three economic downturns, the Federal Reserve started to unwind the interventions it had made to keep markets afloat well after the economic picture started to improve. Knapp calls the six-month periods leading up to each of those turning points in Fed policy a "sweet spot," and says the economy is in one now. □

In the case

Bret Michaels sues Tony Awards

By ANTHONY McCARTNEY
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Bret Michaels sued CBS Broadcasting and the organizers of the Tony Awards on Friday over a 2009 mishap that resulted in him being hit in the head by a set piece, claiming the accident contributed to a brain hemorrhage that nearly killed him. The Poison frontman's lawsuit claims he continues to deal with effects from the injury and brain bleeding that left him hospitalized last year. "Through his sheer will to live, to see his children grow up, Michaels was able to survive this trauma," his lawsuit states. Michaels and Poison performed at the Tony Awards in June 2009 and the singer suffered a busted lip and broken nose when he was whacked by a piece of scenery. He claims show organizers never explained that the set would be changing after the band performed, "Nothin' But a Good Time." He also claims the show could have prevented the incident from



Rock of Ages

airing, but chose not to. Footage of the accident quickly became a viral hit on the Internet, and Michaels' lawsuit claims clips have been viewed more than 27 million times on YouTube. Michaels was hospitalized in April 2010 and doctors found he had a brain hemorrhage and he later suffered a warning stroke, which the musician says nearly killed him. "Michaels was

never told that the scenery piece would be descending or given any warning of the existence of the dangers it presented," the lawsuit states. CBS declined comment and has a policy not to respond to lawsuits outside of court. Phone and e-mail messages left for spokespeople for the Tony Awards were not immediately returned Friday evening. □

Franklin dances at 69th bday party



Aretha Franklin

By NEKESA MUMBI MOODY
Associated Press

NEW YORK — Aretha Franklin proved her voice is still divine at 69 as she gave a brief but rousing performance at a swank birthday party in her honor. Tony Bennett, Smokey Robinson, music mogul Clive Davis, Bette Midler and Gayle King were among the celebrities on hand to pay tribute to the Queen of Soul on Friday night at a late-night birthday party at a Central Park Hotel. "It's a fabulous moment," said Franklin, showing off her noticeably thinner frame in a

flowing white and gold gown as she sat at a table with several gifts.

Bennett, who called Franklin "one of a kind" was one of those who came with a present and his was unique. "I also paint, so she knows about that," he said. "A long time ago, she said, 'I'd love to have you do a painting of

me,' and I remembered that, and when I heard I was coming here, I just knocked off a quick sketch tonight and gave it to her tonight."

More than 100 friends and family gathered to celebrate Franklin, who just a few months ago underwent surgery for an ailment she has declined to disclose. □

Snoop Dogg, Warren G attend service for Nate Dogg

LONG BEACH, Calif. — Rappers Snoop Dogg, Warren G and The Game joined family, friends and about 1,000 fans of Nate Dogg to remember the hip-hop singer, who died this month of complications from multiple strokes.

The family of Nate Dogg whose real name was Nathaniel Dwayne Hale decided that the ceremony at the Queen Mary Dome would not be open to the public as they previously wanted, but they made 1,000 tickets and shuttles available to fans.

The dome in Hale's hometown of Long Beach is adja-

cent to the historic ship the Queen Mary and was the former home of Howard Hughes' airplane folly, the Spruce Goose. Organizers had sought a more central location for the funeral, but none proved large enough for the numbers of expected mourners. A private dinner was planned after the service. Hale started out singing in church choirs, then formed a group with Snoop Dogg and Warren G while the trio was in high school in Long Beach.

His almost monotone vocal stylings anchored some of rap's most seminal songs and

Reese Witherspoon weds agent beau in California



Reese Witherspoon

LOS ANGELES — Reese Witherspoon has walked down the aisle.

A spokeswoman for the actress says the "Walk the Line" star wed her fiancé, Hollywood agent Jim Toth, in Ojai, Calif., about 90 miles north of Los Angeles. Publicist Nicole Perna did not reveal details about the Saturday ceremony. Usmagazine.com first reported the nuptials.

The Oscar-winning actress and Toth announced their engagement in December.

Toth is an agent for Creative



Rapper Snoop Dogg

by legal and health problems, including at least two strokes in 2008. □



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Britney is back, but can she compete with Gaga?



Britney Spears

By Mike Collett-White
Associated Press

LONDON – As Britney Spears prepares to launch her seventh studio album "Femme Fatale" on Tuesday, the pop star faces keen competition from Lady Gaga, Katie Perry and Rihanna, who reign atop Billboard's Hot 100 singles ranking. Her younger rivals' dominance this week may be coincidental indeed, Spears also topped the ranking recently with "Hold It Against Me," but the chart is a reminder of how crowded the pop diva market has become since Spears rose to fame as a teenager. There is little doubt her fans will ensure brisk sales. Spears has sold nearly 70 million albums, according to label Jive Record and her music is making headlines again instead of personal meltdowns, a custody battle and rehab stints. Spears kicked off a string of promotions for the album on Friday with a performance at a Las Vegas nightclub. On Sunday in San Francisco she will record a sold-out mini-concert to be aired on ABC's

"Good Morning America" TV show on Tuesday.

Yet after more than 10 years in the music business, Spears, now 29, may have to do more to remain relevant in the era of Gaga, critics say.

"As far as novelty goes, her natural demographic now has an icon as quirky and characterful as Lady Gaga to fascinate and fuss over," said Andy Gill of Britain's Independent newspaper.

"Gaga's music, let's be frank, is not that much better than, or even different to, that on 'Femme Fatale', but she knows the lingering appeal of playing dress up," he added in a two-out-of-five star review of Spears' record.

Adrian Thrills of the Daily Mail added: "The one-time gymslip diva has had to contend with the emergence of Lady Gaga, Katy Perry and Rihanna a brash new wave of female performers who have made their mark while seemingly exercising far more creative control."

Reviews of "Femme Fatale" have been mixed.

Among the most positive was Rolling Stone Magazine, which awarded the album four stars. "Femme Fatale may be Britney's best album," wrote Jody Rosen, describing it as "a party record packed with sex and sadness."

Hitmaking producers Dr. Luke and Max Martin were responsible for seven of the 12 tracks, while the Black Eyed Peas' will.i.am was behind "Big Fat Bass" and Sweden's Bloodshy worked on "How I Roll" and "Trip To Your Heart."

Critics singled out "Hold It Against Me", with its dubstep

influence, and "Inside Out," as well as "Till the World Ends," which Spin magazine called Spears' "first truly synapse-sizzling single since (2004's) 'Toxic.'"

While there was broad agreement that the electro-pop, ballad-light record would be a dance floor hit, critics felt Spears was in danger of disappearing as a voice and personality.

Alexis Petridis of Britain's Guardian newspaper awarded the album three stars, giving much credit to the producers for creating music that was "genuinely exciting."

But he reflected negatively on Britney's voice, saying it was "as anonymous as ever, a state of affairs amplified by the lavishing of Auto-Tune."

Spears' has said little about the album that has been two years in the making, although she has called "Femme Fatale," "my best work yet" on a recent radio appearance and stressed its dance roots. □

Malawi charity workers sue Madonna over payments



Singer Madonna

LILONGWE – Eight workers at Madonna's Malawi charity are suing the pop star for unfair dismissal and non-payment of their benefits, their lawyer said on Sunday.

The board of the charity, Raising Malawi, was sacked after abandoning plans to build a state of the art girls' school just outside the capital Lilongwe due to mismanagement, the New York Times newspaper reported on Saturday.

Madonna, who has adopted two children from Malawi, lent \$11 million to the organization and is now on the board.

The workers' lawyer, Mzondi Chirambo, said Madonna had 14 days to respond to their concerns.

"Their employment was terminated by the trustees of Raising Malawi Academy for Girls ostensibly following the change of plan not to build the school as planned," Chirambo said. □

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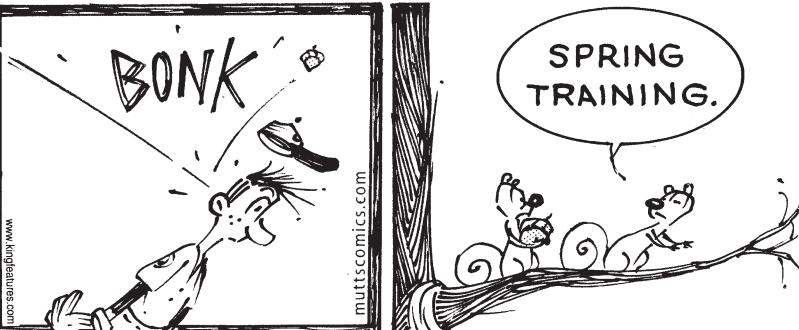
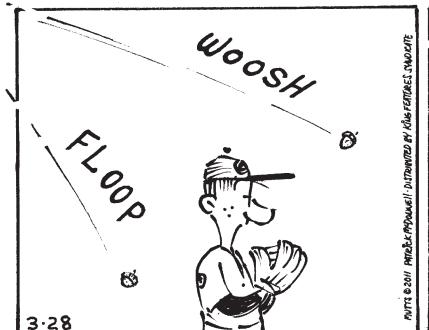
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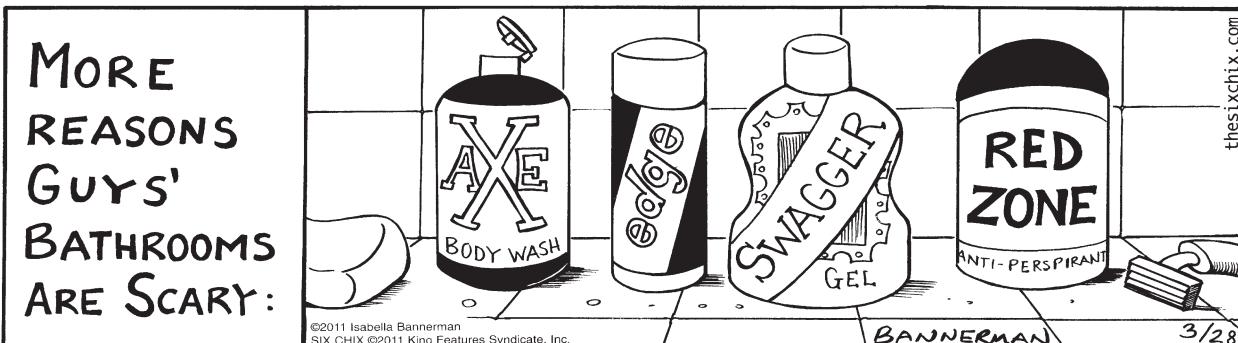
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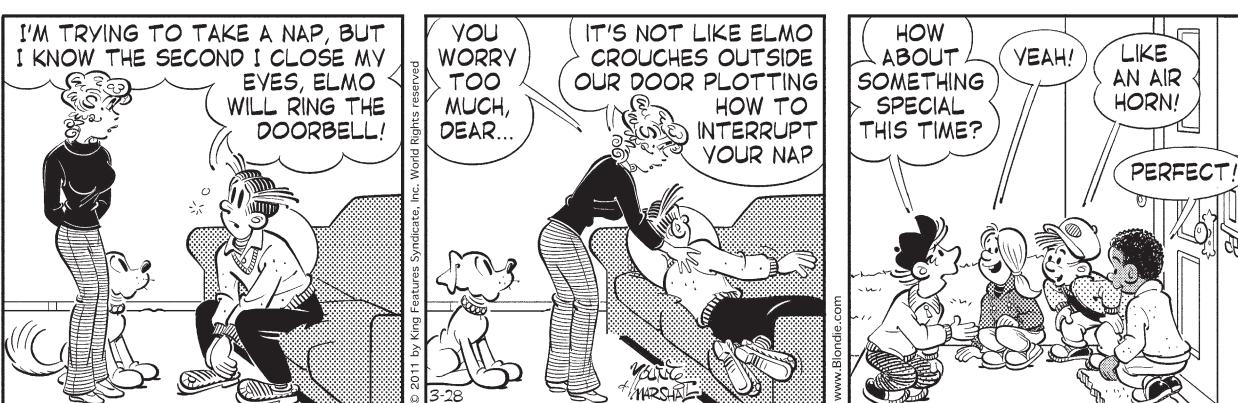
Mutts



6 Chix



Blondie



Saturday's puzzle answer

6	7	9	4	5	3	1	2	8
4	8	2	9	1	7	5	3	6
3	1	5	8	2	6	4	7	9
8	4	3	7	6	2	9	1	5
5	2	6	3	9	1	7	8	4
7	9	1	5	8	4	3	6	2
1	3	8	6	4	9	2	5	7
9	6	7	2	3	5	8	4	1
2	5	4	1	7	8	6	9	3

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Conceptis Sudoku

4			2	9				
	5			6				2
	3	4	7		8			
2	5				7	9		
7	9		4		5	1		
	6	1			4	8		
	6		9	2	1			
9		7	5					
	6	8			3			

Difficulty Level ★ 3/28

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Mother Goose & Grimm



ACROSS

1	Spill the beans	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13		
14			15							16		
17			18							19		
20		21								22		
	23	24								25		
26	27				28					29	30	
31			32	33						34	35	
36			37							38		
39		40								41		
42	43				44					45		
47	48	49			50					51	52	53
54			55	56						57		
58		59			60					61		
62		63										

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

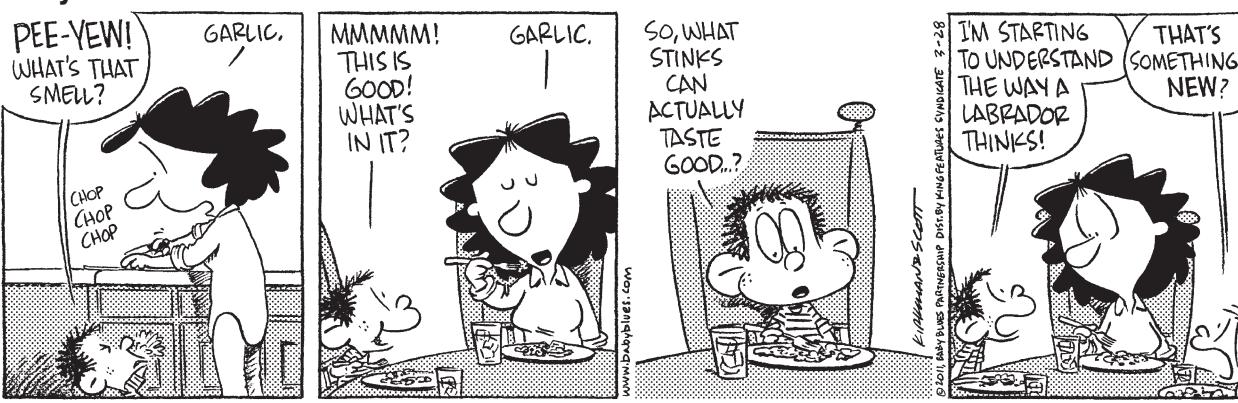
J	A	R	F	T	E	R	I	C	E
I	R	I	S	R	O	G	U	I	D
G	I	F	C	O	N	G	A	F	E
D	E	A	T	H	L	E	L	S	A
E	AT	H	E	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
O	G	R	E	S	D	O	N	A	D
R	U	E	S	T	A	N	A	D	M
T	R	U	S	E	V	E	N	G	S
H	A	R	T	G	I	B	E	F	R
E	T	A	U	G	U	R	F	I	E

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3/28/11

Baby Blues



Saturday's Puzzle Solved



DOWN

1	"Nonsense!"	29	Eden residents	38	City in Nevada
2	Gospel writer	30	Legal, for short	40	One's strong point
3	Nation south of Russia	31	Slender	50	Hubbubs
4	Curtsy	32	Actress Charlotte	53	Cat cries
5	In a cruel way	33	Fraternity letter	55	Prefix for fat or sense
		34	Uses up	56	Perish
		35	Stitched	57	Machine wheel
		36	Flows back		
		37	Harsh; foreboding		

3/28/11

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Wk 6 \$11,000 1BR Pool*
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Wk 8 \$12,000 1BR Pool*
Wk 9 \$8,500 1BR Garden*
Wk 9 \$12,000 1BR Pool*
Wk 10, \$6,500 1BR Garden
Wk 10, \$9,000 1BR Pool*
Wk 14, \$13,000 2BR Pool*
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Ecuador: prohíben a Correa promocionar referendo

ECUADOR (AP)- A un día de iniciada la campaña publicitaria para la consulta popular en Ecuador, la autoridad electoral recordó al presidente Rafael Correa que no podrá promocionar el voto por el sí durante sus programas sabatinos transmitidos por radio y televisión.

“Hay una limitación para hacer proselitismo en las cadenas. Se puede hablar de la consulta, pero no se puede convocar a la gente a votar de una u otra manera”, dijo el titular del Consejo Nacional Electoral (CNE), Omar Simon, en declaraciones difundidas el domingo por diario El Universo.

Agregó que en caso de producirse un acto contrario se debe presentar “una denuncia formal”.

Simon explicó que tanto para el mandatario como para el gobierno está prohibida “la contratación de publicidad con recursos del Estado”. El CNE dispuso unos cinco millones de dólares que serán repartidos en partes iguales a las dos tendencias que promocionan el sí y el no en el referendo.

A Correa “se lo declaró sujeto



En esta foto de archivo, el presidente ecuatoriano, Rafael Correa y la Reina de España Sophia, saludan al pueblo desde un balcón del palacio presidencial en Quito, Ecuador, el 17 de marzo, 2011.

político para que acceda a las franjas y actúe en la campaña exactamente en las mismas condiciones que el resto de actores”, acotó Simon.

Sectores de la oposición han cuestionado la decisión del CNE de incluir al mandatario en las franjas electorales por considerar que están en des-

ventaja ante una supuesta utilización de recursos del Estado para la promoción del sí en el referendo.

El gobernante ha criticado la decisión de la corte electoral pero ha dicho que respetará la disposición.

Desde 2007, cuando asumió el poder, Correa realiza todos los

sábados un programa de hasta tres horas llamado “Diálogo con el presidente” retransmitido por varias radios locales y canales de televisión en manos del Estado. Durante las últimas emisiones, el mandatario ha presentado segmentos para explicar el contenido de las 10 preguntas que serán planteadas en el referendo del 7 de mayo.

La consulta popular busca reestructurar las cortes del país a través de cinco interrogantes que requerirán enmiendas constitucionales, mientras las otras cinco, que sólo implican reformas legales, se refieren a regulaciones para los medios de comunicación y el sistema financiero, así como la prohibición de los juegos de azar y casinos y la matanza de animales en espectáculos públicos. □

Venezuela niega conexión entre PDVSA y fraude en EEUU

VENEZUELA (AP)- La estatal petrolera de Venezuela no tiene vínculos con el director de un fondo de inversión de Connecticut que se declaró culpable de un fraude que podría costarle cientos de millones de dólares a los inversionistas, aseguró el domingo el ministro de energía venezolano.

Petróleos de Venezuela (PDVSA) finiquitó su contrato con Francisco Illarramendi hace años, mucho tiempo antes de que usara el dinero de inversionistas para pagar los rendimientos que prometió a inversores previos y creara documentos apócrifos para respaldar sus afirmaciones falsas sobre los fondos de inversión, afirmó el ministro Rafael Ramírez.

Illarramendi, quien dirigía la empresa Michael Kenwood Capital Management, con sede en Stamford, también enfrenta una demanda civil interpuesta por la Comisión de Valores (Sec) de Estados Unidos.

Los opositores del presidente venezolano Hugo Chávez han acusado a funcionarios de PDVSA —Ramírez entre ellos— de usar a Illarramendi para especular en los mercados financieros con un fondo de retiro para los empleados de la empresa estatal.

Ramírez rechazó el domingo las acusaciones, las cuales, afirma, tienen motivos políticos.

“Es un tipo que no tiene relación con PDVSA”, dijo Ramírez en una entrevista transmitida por la televisora Televen. “Tuvo en algún momento un contrato de servicio”, agregó.

El fiscal federal en Connecticut David Fein dijo que el fraude de Illarramendi es el más grande que ha encarado la oficina a su cargo. □

En Cuba:

Damas de Blanco marchan tras liberación de sus esposos

CUBA (AP) - Las Damas de Blanco realizaron su marcha el domingo por primera vez después de que sus esposos fueran excarcelados y afirmaron que despierta muchas expectativas la visita a Cuba del ex presidente estadounidense James Carter.

“La vida de las Damas de Blanco no ha terminado porque todos los disidentes del grupo de los 75 están en libertad. Nosotros continuaremos nuestras actividades para que sean excarcelados todos los presos de conciencia y para luchar por los derechos humanos” explicó Laura Pollán a la prensa.

La mayoría de las Damas de Blanco están casadas con di-

sidentes que fueron encarcelados en 2003 y desde esa fecha cada domingo asisten a una misa en una iglesia de La Habana y luego con un gladiolo en la mano caminan unas cuadras.

En julio de 2010 el presidente Raúl Castro se reunió con el cardenal Jaime Ortega y anunció que 52 de los 75 condenados en 2003 que aún permanecían presos podrían abandonar las cárceles y viajar a España. Desde esa fecha, 40 se fueron a España y 12 se quedaron en Cuba.

Los disidentes fueron condenados en 2003 bajo cargos de recibir dinero y orientaciones de Estados Unidos y grupos

anticastristas para destruir a la revolución. Los últimos dos salieron de prisión el pasado miércoles.

Pollán, una de las líderes de las Damas de Blanco casada con Héctor Macea, recientemente puesto en libertad, expresó además su esperanza de que el ex presidente Carter sirva de “mediador” en posibles conversaciones entre Cuba y Estados Unidos.

Carter llegará el lunes a la isla en visita privada invitado por el gobierno cubano y tiene previsto reunirse el martes con el presidente Raúl Castro. “Si decide reunirse con nosotras estamos a su disposición” expresó Pollán. □

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